WOODBRIDGE'S TURN

Principal of the Deaf and Dumb Institution

SUBMITTED TO A SEARCHING CROSS-EXAMINATION.

His Private Affairs Much Mixed up With the School Funds.

ACCOUNTS THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO UNRAVEL.

Principal Woodbridge continued his testimony of the Deaf and Dumb Institution investigation Thursday afternoon. He said he regarded the school as a private one. For many years he did not differentiate between his private accounts and those of the institution. He ran both together until three or four years ago when he endeavored to separate them. Although he received public funds from the government and other sources he considered it a private institution.

The witness could not explain what he meant in his direct testimony by saying it was a private venture.

There was some friction between him and the committee about the government funds and he was refused the money.

He did not remember receiving the resolution passed by the committee, refusing to pay him the money as advised by Hon. A. G. Blair. He had the resolution read from the minutes of secretary. He had no profit and loss account and did not know whether he was making money or losing it. He made no saving from year to year. He could explain statement in the annual report that the Botsford property was purchased of the savings from year to year. The accounts do not explain it.

Commissioner Barry said that the accounts do not amount to anything, as head nor tail cannot be made out of them or the books.

The witness could not explain the large differences in the unaccounted balances from year to year.

He stated that the commission and travelling expenses were put in the reports for the information of the public but did not know whether they were all in or not. There was $334.66 for this purpose in one balance sheet and still the unaccounted balance was over $405.

This deficit could not be explained away on the ground that it was for travelling expenses and commission. The collectors made him a return of money, gathered on the trip and expenses of it. When there was a number of unpaid subscriptions he made up a yearly list.

He did not know where last year's list was. It was probably destroyed. There was some unpaid but only small amounts. His explanation of how these unaccounted balances were made up were partly guesswork. Powers kept a book of his expenses and he had seen them but did not know where to find them. He did not know if any of those previous to this year could be found. He thought not.

The auditors never saw the expenses of the collectors and he had to trust to the statement of the witness that the collections were correct. The annual report for 1886 was placed in the hands of the witness and he stated it was a complete list of the subscriptions for the year.

He did not know if any money had been collected in Summerside. He could find none acknowledged. He could not explain why there was not any from that town.

A list of subscribers was shown the witness but he could not say if they had subscribed that year or not.

Commissioner Barry stated in the absence of statements of the expenses and the amount of the unpaid balance the whole question of what became of the money was purely a theoretical problem.

Witness never asked the government to take over the school, but asked the government for an increased grant. The Scarnell farm and houses are his private property. The farm of the institution is the Scarnell lot. The Botsford property has two fields upon it. He gave the use of the farm to the school and considered in working the farm was helping himself. All the expenses of improving the farm were charged to the institution.

He had never told the auditor that the taxes charged were those on his private property, in fact had never told him anything about them.

The taxes were on his own property and the institution also paid his income taxes. Since 1898 he had not charged the taxes to the institution and did not call the attention of the auditor to the fact. He did not know why he abandoned charging them to the institution. He had no knowledge of any insurance on the brick institution except $5,000. He did not know the rate. He paid the premium of insurance. He had no entry to show for the payment.

The attention of witness was called to his own books showing insurance and taxes was $240.91. He could not explain how this sum was made up. That is the amount entered in his books. The taxes were only $32.34 and he could not explain the difference. The books and accounts were destroyed in the fire of 1897. The vouchers were destroyed and the balance sheet was largely made up from memory. The collectors' books were destroyed and he did not know how he made up the subscription list. The books were all destroyed except those produced. He did not know whether the insurance on his own private property was charged up against the institution or not. He had no personal insurance on the brick building. He had $1,000 on his own furniture in his own name. There was also $1,000 in name of institution. There was $2,000 insurance on the furniture in the school He made out a proof of loss for his own. furniture and, he thought also for the school. The insurance in his own name was on the furniture. The furniture in the government house is partly his own and partly the institution's. He could give no idea what was his personal furniture. He thought that the proof of the loss for he schools did not contain his own parlor suite. He stated the wagons, horses and every thing on the farm belonged to him.

He could not explain why he charged the difference in the horse trade against the institution.

"Are all these things in running accounts of institution and charged to the institution your property. Answer— yes

"The public and government funds were appropriated for the purchase of harness, wagons etc. you consider your own.—yes.

George Bolter gave evidence during a portion of the afternoon on the methods, etc., of collecting.

Today's Proceedings.

The cross examination of Prof. Woodbridge was resumed by Mr. Phinney at this morning's session of the D. and D. commission. The witness was questioned in regard to the insurance claim for the furniture destroyed by fire at the institution in 1897. He explained that part of the furniture destroyed was his own property and part was owned by the institution; it was not all purchased from the funds of the institution. The witness had no record showing what proportion of the furniture was his own. At the time he submitted a statement to the insurance companies showing the amount on the institution furniture. There was $1000 insurance on his own furniture and $1000 on that belonging to the institution. Whatever belonged to the institution was destroyed by fire. Furniture to the value of $1000 had been purchased on behalf of the institution for old government house, and additions had since been made. He could not say positively that the same amount of furniture had been put in old government house as had been in the brick building. He could not say just what the value of furniture in old government house was at the present time. It was true that the sum of $1,158 09 had been expended on furniture and repairs during the first year of his occupancy of government house. There was at present no insurance on furniture belonging to the institution, nor was there any on his own furniture. He thought $1,200 would be rather a high valuation on the furniture at present belonging to the institution. He would not include as property of the institution any of the property outside of the building, and he considered he had a claim on the furniture inside of the building as well as any other property connected with it.

Mr. Phinney in reply to a question by Mr. Gregory said he was not anxious to take over the institution, but he would say frankly that he thought it was about time somebody took it over.

Continuing, Mr. Woodbridge said he considered the funds contributed by the government and municipalities as school funds. The funds contributed by subscribers were used for the same purpose and treated as school funds. He could not say that any portion was looked upon as his own private funds. He considered that all moneys contributed were intended for the purposes of the school. He held that he had a claim against the institution for what was due him for the three and a half years that he worked without salary. He could not say that the trustees were responsible for his salary for that period. He regarded the institution as public only so far as its object was to educate the deaf and dumb. The gate house was not burned at the time the institution was destroyed, but sustained some damage. He could not remember having been paid anything by the insurance companies for this. There was only $5000 insurance on the brick building at the time it was destroyed.

The school was removed to government house in 1897. He did not charge his taxes against the institution after making the change. Mr. Phinney called the witness' attention to an item of $36.61 for taxes entered in the accounts of 1898. The witness admitted the item was correct, but claimed that it was the last charge of the kind he had made. The amount referred to was the tax on the gate house and the orchard house, so called. He did not think he had made any charge for taxes after the permanent auditor had been appointed in 1898.

Commissioner Barry said he found from the evidence that the institution possessed assets to the value of about $3,850. Included in this was the furniture, which was estimated to be worth $1,000 apart from the lien which Mr. Woodbridge claimed to have upon it.

In reply to Mr. Phinney, the witness stated that the Botsford property was purchased by the institution in 1886.

Mr. Phinney said the records showed that the purchase had been made in 1884 and asked the witness if it was not possible that he was mistaken. Mr. Woodbridge contended that he was right, and quite a lively discussion followed, which was finally ended by Mr. Gregory, who jogged the memory of his client, by quoting from a report to show that the purchase had really been made in 1884.

Continuing, the witness said he gave instructions to merchants doing business with the institution to keep separate accounts of purchases made for the family and the institution. He could not say positively that they had followed his instructions in all cases. An item for silver spoons, charged against the institution, was referred to and the witness was unable to say whether they were for private use or for the institution. He would not say that goods purchased with the institution funds were not regarded by him as his private property. The institution had a private drug account with Geo. Y. Dibblee. He would not say that such articles as perfumery and Pears' soap, unless purchased for a specific purpose, would be properly chargeable against the institution.

[CONTINUED ON SIXTH PAGE.]

James Emery, a farmer near Ashton, was shot and killed by an orphan boy in his employ. It is thought the pistol went off accidently.