

tised for, as we wish for our own satisfaction to find out how this matter was put through.

Yours very truly,

THE PAGE WIRE FENCE COMPANY,  
Limited,  
(Sgd.) Merton Church,  
Secretary Treasurer.

I will place before the House the correspondence which took place between this firm and the Department of the Interior. On March 20th the Page Wire Fence Company addressed the following letter to the Department of the Interior:

Department of the Interior,  
Ottawa, Ont.

Gentlemen,—We have heard that the government intend fencing the boundary in the Northwest between the United States and Canada, and that several hundred miles of fencing and steel posts will be required. We, of course, are much interested in this, and take the liberty to ask as to what official will have the matter in charge, so that we can communicate with him.

Thanking you in anticipation, we are,

Yours very truly,  
THE PAGE WIRE FENCE COMPANY,  
Limited,  
(Sgd.) Merton Church,  
Secretary Treasurer.

On April 8th, in answer to their letter of the 20th March, the Page Wire Fence Company received this letter from the Department of the Interior:

Ottawa, 8th April, 1905.

Gentlemen,—Replying to your letter of the 20th ultimo in reference to the erection of a wire fence at the southern boundary of the Northwest Territories, I beg to state that the government has awarded the contract in this matter.

Your obedient servant,  
P. G. KEYES,  
Secretary.

The following letter was addressed to Mr. Keyes, secretary of the Department of the Interior in reply:

April 18th, 1905.

Mr. P. G. Keyes,  
Secretary Department of the Interior,  
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Sir,—Referring to your number 64255, your letter of April 8th, will you kindly inform us as to when, and where, appeared the advertisement calling for tenders for the government boundary fencing in the Northwest. We failed to see or hear of any such advertisement, and hence did not know until a late date that the government contemplated such a purchase. Also, unfortunately, our inquiry of February 20th failed to reach its destination promptly, and we did not know anything definite about the matter until we got your announcement that the contract was let.

Yours very truly  
THE PAGE WIRE FENCE COMPANY,  
Limited,  
(Sgd.) Merton Church,  
Secretary Treasurer.

After putting a question upon the order paper and having the answer of the Prime

Mr. CLEMENTS.

Minister, I mailed it to the people who referred the matter to me, and this is their letter in reply:

May 2nd, 1905.

H. S. Clements, M.P.,  
House of Commons,  
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Sir,—We are in receipt of your valued letter of the 1st instant, and are very much pleased to note the attention you have given the matter of boundary line. You are certainly following it up in a very satisfactory manner.

It certainly seems very strange that the premier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, would deny that the contract has been let, while the secretary of the Interior Department stated that it has been let. In order that you may have the matter before you in black and white, we inclose you the correspondence we have had with the department, including the letter from the secretary. It looks as if it would be a difficult job to reconcile the statements of the two officials.

Again thanking you for your trouble in this matter and hoping to be able to reciprocate, we are,

Yours very truly  
THE PAGE WIRE FENCE COMPANY,  
Limited,  
(Sgd.) Merton Church,  
Secretary Treasurer.

Now, Mr. Speaker, all I have to say is that it does seem a very strange thing that this contract should have been let in the manner in which it has been let, and I think the country is entitled to some explanation of the circumstances. As we all know it is a very large contract and involves the expenditure of a great deal of money.

An hon. MEMBER. How long is the fence.

Mr. CLEMENTS. 700 or 800 miles perhaps, but I am not prepared to state what the value of the whole contract is. I move the adjournment of the House in the expectation that the government will give some explanation of the matter.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. It is quite evident, from the facts that have been brought to the attention of the House by my hon. friend, that there has been some misapprehension somewhere. If the correspondence which he has given to the House is authentic, I have been misinformed as to the answer which I gave to my hon. friend when he put the question. I am sorry to say that at this moment it is not possible to give an explanation, but the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver) will have inquiry made and the exact condition of things will be made known to my hon. friend at a later day; probably to-morrow.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I suppose we may assume as authentic the information conveyed in the letter of the 8th of April from the secretary of the department to the Page Wire Fence Company, Limited, and which says: