

# FARLEY'S PRIVATE MATTERS

## A MANTLE COVERING A MULTITUDE OF THINGS.

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SHERIFF'S ACCOUNTS REFUSED UPON THIS GENERAL PLEA OF PRIVACY.

At yesterday's session of Col. Bacon's investigating committee, at the Brooklyn City Hall, Mr. Parsons hammered again particularly hard at the Sheriff's office, and succeeded in developing the fact that the Sheriff of Kings County was not only very shaky as to his ability to read and write correctly, but that his knowledge of at least the financial conduct of his office was, in the extreme, limited.

Register Murtha was first called to the stand, and said that he desired to give a supplementary explanation to his previous testimony. He said he had consulted with his attorney and was able to talk more intelligently about the funds of his office. He explained the lawsuit which had been brought against him by the Guarantee Title and Trust Company for damages for his not allowing its employes the facilities of his office. This suit had been amicably settled, and he allowed it to continue its custom of putting its men in his office. For this privilege \$5,275 was paid. In reviewing the gross and net receipts and the expenditures of his office, the Register made this statement: The total income for 1886 was \$48,304 78. Of this amount the searchers turned in \$13,591 16, of which about \$6,000 was derived from extras. His share of the extras was 33 1/2 per cent. Mr. Parsons then asked about the average amount charged for the recording of deeds, mortgages, &c., and the witness said the charges varied, according to the "size" of the document to be recorded, from \$1 25 to \$3.

Mr. Parsons then called unavailingly for Charles H. Kelsea, of the Guarantee Trust Company, and then put the contumacious Mr. McLaughlin again on the stand and asked if he had the check book containing stubs, about which he was asked Saturday. Mr. McLaughlin produced it, and was asked to refer to the checks payable to Sheriff Farley for \$12,000, Nov. 7, 1885; Feb. 13, 1886, \$13,618 75; May 3, 1886, \$5,000. Mr. Parsons examined the stubs and asked:

"What is the explanation that in the cash book these moneys are entered as disbursements and no such entry appears in the stub?"

"Because I didn't think it necessary to enter it in the stub when I paid a man his own money."

The account at the Fulton Bank is kept in the name of Sheriff Farley, but Mr. McLaughlin said that he had authority to draw checks against it. At the Brooklyn Trust Company Sheriff Farley alone had authority to draw money on checks. Mr. McLaughlin was then asked if he could explain what became of the fifty-odd thousand dollars drawn in bank bills during 1886 by Sheriff Farley, and said he didn't know anything about it.

"What transaction in money between you and the Sheriff has passed between Saturday and now?" Mr. Parsons asked suddenly.

"None," answered the witness.

"Where do you keep your account, Mr. McLaughlin?" Mr. Parsons asked after a pause.

"Where I please."

"Name the bank."

"I will not. I won't tell you anything about it. Ask me outside, and I'll tell you. I won't be forced to. The committee has no right to investigate my private account."

Further questioning on this line only elicited sharp retorts from the witness, and he was then interrogated as to two items entered upon the Brooklyn Trust Company cash book for \$2,000 and \$500 called "notes." McLaughlin explained that these were promissory notes given by Sheriff Farley. It was at a time soon after he was elected, and he borrowed the money on his notes from the trust company.

"Were they issued in his official capacity as Sheriff?"

"Oh! no; not at all."

Several other such items were found, aggregating in all something over \$5,000 and explained in the same way. There were also recorded notes given by the Sheriff to various private citizens, among whom was Congressman Felix Campbell, for amounts from \$100 to \$500 each. Sheriff Farley was then called and asked for what his note to Congressman Campbell was given.

"That's a private matter, counsel," he replied, "and I object to answer."

Mr. Parsons then asked the witness if since Saturday a subpoena had been served upon him, and he said there had been such a document handed to him, but he had left it at home. That subpoena required him to produce all papers and memoranda showing the amount of money he had received which he had drawn from the Sheriff's office in 1886; to show what he had done, item by item, with the money, and particularly how much money he then had in his possession at the Raymond-Street Jail. Farley said he had not done any of those things, nor did he intend to do so.

"Is it not a fact that, going to the war, as you did, when so young, you failed to learn to read or write?" Mr. Parsons asked.

"No, Sir, it is not a fact. I haven't college education, but I know some things."

"Can you keep an account?"

"Yes, I guess so."

"Have you informed yourself, then, upon the subject of the Sheriff's accounts?"

"No, Sir; I have full confidence in Mr. McLaughlin, the Under Sheriff."

"Have you made any money transactions since last Saturday, Mr. Farley?" Mr. Parsons asked.

"No, Sir, I have not."

"Received any money since then?"

"No, Sir, I have not."

"Are you able to tell, Mr. Farley, exactly how much money you have at the jail?"

"Yes; I am able to tell."

"How much have you there?"

"Well, I object."

He was sure that the \$6,000 he said he gave to his father-in-law came out of his fifteen-thousand-dollar check, drawn from the Brooklyn Trust Company.

Asked about a promissory note for \$1,000 to Senator John J. Kiernan, which he is recorded as having given, Sheriff Farley "objected" to answer, as he did also concerning a five-hundred-dollar note given to Col. Thomas Carroll. Mr. Parsons asked if a note given to George Engeman was also a private matter, and the Sheriff said, "I guess so."

Asked to read an item in the cash book, he said "I didn't come here to read, but to testify; I object."

"Isn't it a fact that you can't read it?" The words seemed to jump out of Mr. Parsons's mouth.

Farley was confused. "Oh, that's a private matter," he responded, and the assemblage roared with laughter.

He was asked what public business was represented by three notes for \$250 each given to Andrew McLean, and responded with the old, old answer, "That's a private matter."

"These account books are the accounts of the Sheriff's office?" asked Chairman Bacon.

"Yes; but my private accounts are there, too," Farley answered.

"Will you point out any items in these books which are public?"

"I object to answer."

"Do you know which are public and which are private?"

"No, Sir; I do not."

"Are these books kept by McLaughlin as Under Sheriff for you as Sheriff?"

"Yes, if he says so; he's the man I swear by."

Going into politics a little, the Sheriff volunteered the information that McLaughlin was opposed to his nomination for Sheriff. McLaughlin was the man of men, though, and he ought to be asked about the accounts, not the witness. The Sheriff was asked if he was certain that he had received the entire income of the Sheriff's office as he was represented to have received it, and he said he was. All the questions which he had refused to answer were then repeated with the order of the committee that he answer them, and the Sheriff's refusal to do so was absolute. Then he was asked by Mr. Bacon how he signed his name, and he said "C. B. Farley." Once or twice he had signed it Charles B. Farley.

As he was leaving his seat Anthony Barrett, his counsel, who had been standing by the reporter's table, called out suddenly and loudly:

"Charlie, Charlie, go back on the stand and tell 'em that those books are your private property."

The committee looked stupefied at the interruption. The Sheriff obediently did as he was told and mumbled out a statement, prompted by Barrett, who called out his instructions as loudly as before. He further said that the books were private accounts with which the committee had nothing to do.

Mr. Parsons quickly asked: "How can you say now that they're your private property when you said on the stand that they were the accounts of the Sheriff's office."

The crowd laughed and the Sheriff looked helplessly around.

He was hustled out of the way and Mr. Parsons called for Mr. Barrett to take the stand.

"I believe you are the Sheriff's official counsel," mildly inquired Mr. Parsons.

"No, Sir, I am not," Mr. Barrett shortly responded, giving his right leg a slap, "but I am his counsel in the broad, general sense of the term."

Mr. Parsons called the witness's attention to that part of the Sheriff's testimony which described among the list of his employes, Anthony Barrett, "counsel, salary, \$2,500 per year," but the witness said it didn't make any difference. He had been Farley's "counsel" before he ever entered into practice as a lawyer. Every question asked by Mr. Parsons was criticized (as to its formation) by Mr. Barrett. The latter talked long and loudly about what he had done to "systematize" the Sheriff's office, and his utterances were once or twice applauded. He, furthermore, had advised the Sheriff not to answer questions concerning the disposition of his income, and he did it upon his legal responsibility. The fees which the Sheriff received, Mr. Barrett said, were received officially, but as soon as they passed into his hands they became his private funds, and he was not accountable to anybody for their disposition.

"Does he receive more than his legal fees?" asked Mr. Parsons.

"No, Sir, he does not receive more than his legal fees," Mr. Barrett responded with great vigor.

"How much did he receive in 1886, do you know?"

"I haven't figured it out yet. But I will, and I'll see that every dollar that he ought to get

will go to him. I can find out and trace every cent that comes into the office and I will."

"How will you find out?"

"By examining the cash books. I laid out the system."

"Why, in 'laying out the system,' did you arrange it so that so many vague 'disbursement' items appear in the cash book?"

Then Mr. Barrett said that he didn't direct the form of entry, but directed that it should be done in the simplest manner. Under Sheriff McLaughlin was a man of habit and his books had been kept as had been his custom for years.

Mr. Barrett was asked if he knew why Farley had had need of so many bank bills in 1886, and he said he "s'posed he wanted to invest 'em." He did not think that the using of over \$50,000 in bank bills in a year was at all extraordinary; anyhow, the Sheriff knew what he was doing, and was well able to look after his own money.

Mr. Barrett, in a delivery much affected by stump speakers, delivered a long disquisition to the effect that there was more money lying around loose in the pockets of timid old women who were afraid of banks than in all the banks of Brooklyn.

Mr. Barrett then inadvertently disclosed the fact that some time in February, 1886, he went one day with Sheriff Farley to the bank and was paid his year's salary from the proceeds of a large check which the Sheriff got cashed. Reference to the books showed that the only check drawn by the Sheriff at that time was one on Feb. 7 for \$13,618 75. Immediately under this entry was another one, "Salary to Anthony Barrett for one year, \$2,500."

"Isn't it rather a curious thing," asked Mr. Parsons, "that if your salary was paid by the Sheriff out of that \$13,618 75 both entries should have been entered as amounts paid?"

"Well," the witness responded, "I can't answer for McLaughlin's bookkeeping."

Alexander R. Thompson, the Brooklyn manager of the Guarantee Title and Trust Company, was called in his stead. He had hardly given his name and been sworn when Mr. Barrett rushed back and said that he would explain about Sheriff Farley's notes to prominent men about which the Sheriff had refused to talk. The committee promptly refused to allow him to do anything of the kind, and Mr. Barrett retired discomfited. Mr. Thompson then gave unimportant testimony concerning the relations of his company with the Register's office, and the committee adjourned its session until 10 o'clock Friday morning.

ALBANY, March 7.—The four Brooklyn office holders who refused to tell the Bacon Investigating Committee what they have done with their loose change will, if Mr. Bacon carries out his purpose, be dragged before the bar of the House and dealt with as contumacious witnesses. Mr. Bacon says that great care will be necessary in drawing the papers, and several days will elapse before they are ready to be served. The four witnesses thus to be dealt with are Sheriff Farley, Under-Sheriff McLaughlin, Register Murtha, and County Clerk Ranken. Committeeman Arnold says that the committee has discovered the trail of several offending Republicans. He believes this should be followed up, and the same treatment given them as corrupt Democrats. Mr. Arnold is a Republican.

Col. Bacon declares that the committee is already in possession of evidence sufficient to convict several Brooklyn men of malfeasance in office.