

unknown element coming into it, and that is the future. We may have a hundred and fifty accounts coming in during the next six months, or only a hundred; so that you cannot gauge the ledger-space you will require in any given period.

982. What is to prevent you, then, opening new ledgers when the old ones are done, at certain periods, either quarterly, half-yearly, or annually—that is, at stated periods, and not under your present irregular system of opening them any day in the week, as your inclination leads you?—There is nothing to prevent the opening of ledgers periodically but the practice of the office.

982A. I observe that in opening new ledgers under your present system you do not always—even seldom—put the folio where the balance has been transferred from the old ledger?—That is an oversight.

983. You do not bring forward the totals of the transactions?—I suppose that is the case; but I do not know that it is the case in all instances.

984. Have you not satisfied yourself on that point?—No, I have never satisfied myself.

985. If I tell you it is so, having gone carefully through your ledgers, would you doubt it?—I should not doubt anything you told me.

986. In your opinion, in the middle of a balancing-period—that is, between one annual balance and the other—if it is necessary to open a new ledger, and take forward the balances from the old ledger, is it not necessary to take forward the transactions to prove that balance?—I think you will find most accounts transferred have been transferred at the end of a year. Those accounts transferred during the currency of a financial period are, I suppose, the transferred A to L accounts carried into the new ledger.

987. If a new ledger is opened in the middle of the year, or any part of the year before your balance-day, is it not necessary to take forward the transactions with the balance?—Yes, certainly.

988. Are you aware whether that has been done?—I suppose it has not been done. They have been following the old practice, and not showing the additions of the transactions.

989. Then, although it might necessitate the use of new ledgers more frequently, would it not be convenient to keep the whole of your accounts in at least half, or less than half, the number of individual ledgers now in use?—With this one drawback: that, looking at an estate account, we should have more ledgers to look through.

990. You still have that drawback under your present system? As the office grows older and the work larger, and as business rolls into and through your office and is dealt with in your office, you are bound to have that difficulty to face; and therefore, looking at that, I ask you again whether it would not be more convenient, and a reference more easily made to accounts in active use, by bringing the accounts that are now in twelve individual ledgers into a very much fewer number?—Yes; it would be better. One advantage would be that the ledgers would be better preserved—not so much knocked about. That would be one advantage.

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FRIDAY, 17TH APRIL, 1891.

Mr. MOGINIE's examination continued.

991. *The Chairman.*] Now, Mr. Moginie, since I last had the pleasure of speaking with you on this ledger business, have you thought the matter over whether the individual ledgers of this office could not be reduced even to three in number?—Well, I have not specially thought on the question again; but I think that separating the estates into classes is a good system. By that means we keep them quite separate and distinct.

992. Well, is it not possible to form classes in one ledger—that is to say, that one ledger might contain more than one class of accounts?—You might have one ledger for the two branches of the wills and trusts, containing the whole alphabet. At present we have them separate.

993. Then you agree that it is possible to have more than one class of accounts in one ledger?—It is possible; but it has its disadvantages, because if you have half-a-dozen accounts to make out you have only one ledger, and you can only make them one after the other. If you have two, you can have two men making them out.

994. I want to do that without the two men dealing with the ledger. If you have three ledgers, and the daily work was not heavy, you might have only one ledger-keeper, or, if the daily work was large, and consequently your ledgers were much used, it might be necessary to have two or even three ledger-keepers—a ledger-keeper to each ledger?—Of course, it frequently happens that statements of accounts are wanted at the same time.

995. Tell me this: Diverting a little from the thread of my questions on the number of ledgers, if a statement of an account from a ledger was required, who is the proper officer to make out that statement?—The Ledger-keeper, of course.

996. Therefore, upon reconsideration, your answer as to the difficulty against having more than one class of accounts in a ledger might be different?—Well, I certainly think it desirable to have a ledger-keeper whose duty shall be to do nothing else but keep ledgers, and make out statements of accounts.

997. Is there any objection, for the sake of convenience, and perhaps economy, to having more than one class of accounts in one ledger?—It is to prevent a deadlock between officers that it is desirable not to have more than one class of accounts in one ledger.

998. Will you show the Commissioners how the deadlock can occur?—If officers require to refer to ledgers in different classes of estates, it is better to have them separate.

999. What officers are required to refer to ledgers except the Ledger-keepers and the head of the office?—Of course, the head of the office may call for information which will have to be got from the ledger.

1000. Who would supply that information?—Whatever officer is available.