

R E P O R T

Of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the cause of the Fire at the Parliament House, on the First of February instant, and the circumstances attending the same:—

To His Excellency Lieutenant General WILLIAM ROWAN, C.B., Administrator of the Government of the Province of Canada, and Commander of Her Majesty's Forces therein, &c., &c.

May it please your Excellency :

On the receipt of the Commission bearing date the first day of February instant, (Appendix A.) (Copy of which is hereunto annexed,) appointing the undersigned a Commission to inquire into the cause of the fire which took place at the Parliament Buildings, on the morning of that day, and the circumstances connected therewith, they proceeded, immediately on the same day, to the investigation of every circumstance calculated to throw light upon the origin of the extensive conflagration by which that spacious edifice was wholly destroyed.

With a view to the better understanding of such evidence as might be given before them, the Commissioners proceeded to view the ruins of the burned building, being accompanied in their visit by the Honorable the Attornies General, Inspector General, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Chief Commissioner of Public Works and the Solicitor General for Lower Canada. (Appendix F.) Previously to hearing any evidence, they deemed it advisable to obtain the attendance, at the sittings of the Commission, of the representatives of the different Insurance Companies, in which Insurance on the Parliament House and its furniture had been effected, and they therefore invited those Gentlemen to be present thereat.

Several of them consequently attended. All persons who, either from their residence or employment in the building, their accurate knowledge of the construction of it and its appurtenances, or whom rumor reported, for various reasons, to be likely to afford information as to the real or probable cause of the disaster, were called before the Commission, and a general invitation by advertisement inserted in the Quebec newspapers, was given to all persons having any information to afford to the Commission in relation to the matter forming the subject of their inquiry. The depositions containing their evidence are respectfully submitted with this report, to form part thereof. (Appendix B.)

(Appendix C. Nos. 1 to 47.) By that evidence it appears that the first signs of fire were discovered about three o'clock in the morning of the first instant, and that the fire was then confined to that part of the new wing (known as the Legislative Council wing) occupied as a wardrobe, (lately converted into a Reading Room) on the ground floor, and the rooms immediately over it on the upper stories.

(Appendix C. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 27, 28, 30, 34, 40, 42.)

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