

By a report from Lieutenant-colonel Walker, your Excellency will see that the barracks were only saved by being covered with tin; the mess-house and officers' apartments, at present roofed with shingle, were on fire, and only preserved by the exertions of the men. Had this building caught fire, it must have communicated to the contiguous houses belonging to the upper town, and it is impossible to say how far the devastation would have reached.

Lieutenant-colonel Ward, of the Royal Engineers, had taken every necessary precaution to secure the powder magazine near to the Hotel Dieu, a short way east from Palace-gate, and I am happy to inform your Excellency that no accident occurred, though the wood and copings on the top of the ramparts, not further than betwixt 20 or 30 yards from the magazine, were on fire, and had to be torn up and thrown over the rock.

The flames continued their progress with frightful rapidity, consuming the houses and two large breweries along the foot of the rock leading to Hope-gate, and every man that could be collected was employed in destroying the buildings, and cutting off the communication from the lower town, at a point where the salient rock approached near to the river St. Charles; had the flames continued beyond this narrow space, nothing could have saved a great part of the lower town and the quays from being destroyed. Owing, however, to the exertions of the troops, whose steady, active and willing conduct on this melancholy occasion exceeds any praise that I can bestow on them, the communication was successfully cut off, and the fire completely stopped by about half-past 10 o'clock, P.M.: one house was unroofed, but this was found to be too slow an operation, and the two contiguous houses had to be blown up. The flames had communicated, about 8 o'clock, P.M., to a large yard filled with stacks of deals, close to the river St. Charles, and a separation had to be made through the middle of the yard by the removal of a great part of the wood, to cut off the burning stacks of deals from the range of quays round the lower town, which was effected by the unremitting exertions of the soldiers, and the aid of two fire-engines, ordered to this point by Mr. Caron, the Mayor of Quebec. Some time about 8 P.M., the wind moderated and changed to the southward, to which providential circumstance the safety of the lower town is chiefly to be attributed. I beg to remark to your Excellency, that the troops performed this service during the whole time, unaided by the people of the town, very few individuals having offered their services, notwithstanding the efforts of several gentlemen of the town to whom I appealed, but whose attempts to call forth the exertions of the idlers were unavailing. I beg to repeat to your Excellency, that nothing could exceed the willing exertions of the different commanding officers, and of all ranks employed; and I am happy to say that, during the whole time the fire lasted, I did not observe one single drunken soldier. The suburbs of St. Roch's present an appearance of frightful desolation, from the greater part of the houses being of wood, chiefly belonging to artisans and the poor; there is nothing to be seen but a forest of chimneys; and I am apprehensive that the rapidity of the fire prevented many from escaping, and that there are a number of victims to the flames. The fire communicated so suddenly, and spread with such rapidity over the wood-yard, that it was with difficulty the troops employed escaped from the flames. I am happy to say that, though the men were frequently exposed to danger, and acted with fearless intrepidity, I have not heard of any casualties. The officers and men of the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, and of the wing of the 14th Regiment, of the 43d Light Infantry, and of the 89th Regiment, are fully deserving of any expression of approbation which your Excellency may think proper to bestow on them. It is computed that about 1,500 houses have been consumed, and 15,000 inhabitants deprived of their houses and homes, and many of the poor solely depending on the benevolence and charity of the people.

His Excellency Lieut.-general
Sir R. D. Jackson,
&c. &c. &c., K. C. H.

I have, &c.
(signed) J. A. Hope,
Major-general.

My Lord,

Quebec, 1 July 1845.

It is with great grief that I have to report to your Excellency another dreadful conflagration that took place in the suburbs of Quebec, on the night of the 28th June, by which 1,200 houses were consumed. The fire is said to have originated about 20 minutes before 12 o'clock at night, in a hangard behind the house of Monsieur Tessier, a notary, at the beginning of Aiguillon-street, close to the glacis outside of St. John's-gate, and spread with frightful rapidity along the whole length of that street, of St. John's-street, consuming the whole of the suburbs of St. John's, and extending to the ruins of the St. Roch's suburbs, burnt by the former fire. There was no time lost in turning out the whole of the troops, but the rapidity of the flames, for a considerable time, defied all human exertion, and continued their frightful progress along the St. Foy-road, a distance of 1,200 yards, as long, with very few exceptions, as there were any houses to burn, and spreading against the wind, from one narrow street to another, in the direction of the St. Louis-road. Unfortunately a gale of wind was blowing from the east, and the whole breadth of the St. John's suburbs appeared to be on fire at the same moment.

During the night Monsieur Caron, the Mayor of Quebec, came to me to point out a spot near the glacis, betwixt the St. John's and the St. Louis gates, that should be cut off, and a house was immediately blown up, by which a considerable part of the suburbs of St. Louis was saved: