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PAPERS

RELATIVE TO

FORTIFICATIONS AND DEFENCES

OF

CANADA.

No. 1.

Lord Seaton to Lord John Russell.—(Received January 1, 1840.)

My Lord,

Lyneham, December 30, 1839.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint your Lordship, with reference to your letter of the 23rd instant, relative to the defensive works recommended to be constructed in Canada, that most of the posts which I directed to be occupied in June 1838, at a time of great excitement in the Upper Province, have been established.

The barrack at Chatham, however, was ordered to be built for 200 men instead of 400. No block-house has been erected at Queenston, and at the Niagara Falls, Brockville, Cornwall, and Lancaster. Barracks were hired for the accommodation of troops at those stations.

Since my despatch to Lord Glenelg of the 13th March, I have corrected my opinion in respect to the number of posts which I suggested should be established along the frontier of Lower Canada.

The stations which I think it will be necessary to protect by permanent works are described in the accompanying memoranda. The encouragement given by the American patriots to the disaffected in Upper Canada cannot fail to create alarms occasionally. Under these circumstances, and in the present state of Canadian affairs, public confidence will be much increased by establishing strong posts on the parts of the frontier most exposed to the incursions of the Americans, and thus rendering nearly the whole regular force disposable on any emergency, without incurring any risk by leaving depôts of arms and stores in charge of the militia.

The estimates for the construction of barracks at Chambly, St. John's, La Prairie, and Amherstburg amounted, I believe, to about 60,000*l*.

To this outlay Commissary-General Routh probably refers in his statement of disbursements for the ensuing year. If permanent works are erected at Amherstburg, and in the Niagara district, the outlay at each post would probably amount to 70,000*l*.

The work proposed for the defence of St. John's might be constructed for 40,000*l*.

From the confidential report which I have transmitted to Lord Fitzroy Somerset of the Officer commanding Engineers in Canada, after his inspection between the 8th May and the 1st June, your Lordship will obtain information respecting the importance of the posts of Amherstburg and Niagara.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) SEATON.