

LOWER CANADA.

Mr. Secretary
Spring Rice to
Lord Aylmer.

— No. 3. —

Circular DESPATCH from Mr. Secretary *Spring Rice* to Lord *Aylmer*.

My Lord,

Downing-street, 14th August 1834.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the enclosed copy of a letter addressed by my directions to the Deputy Secretary at War, and of the reply, by which you will observe that free grants of land are no longer to be made to discharged soldiers. The single and temporary exception to this rule will be, in the case of men of the Sappers and Miners employed on the Rideau Canal, to whom a special expectation of grants of lands appears to have been held out in 1829, and who must therefore be allowed a twelvemonth in which to advance their claims, before they be finally barred, in conformity with the general arrangement now adopted. I enclose, for your information and guidance, the copy of a letter from the Ordnance Department on this subject.

I have the honour further to transmit to you the enclosed copies of communications, which I have caused to be addressed to the Military Secretary, to the General commanding in chief, and to the Secretary to the Admiralty, as well as of the Regulations which have consequently been issued, respecting the privileges allowed to officers of the army and navy in acquiring land in the colonies.

As the principles on which the measures embodied in these several letters clearly appear from the documents themselves, and indeed have formed a subject of frequent explanation and remark in the correspondence between this department and your government, it is only necessary for me to desire that your Lordship will guide yourself according to the rules now laid down, which I hope you will find adapted, in many respects, to meet such difficulties in detail, as have occasionally been reported to the Secretary of State to obstruct the practical proceedings of the local governments respecting military settlers.

I have, &c.
(signed) *T. Spring Rice*.

N. B.—Similar despatch, with the necessary alterations, addressed to the other governors of the North American and Australian colonies.

(Enclosures.)

Sir,

Downing-street, 12th July 1834.

Mr. Sullivan,
30 Sept. 1830.
Ditto, 23 Oct. 1830.
Mr. Hay, 4 Nov.
1830.

IN reference to the correspondence enumerated in the margin, relating to the granting of lands in the colonies to discharged soldiers, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Spring Rice to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary at War, that since the time when that correspondence took place the value of land in the colonies has very much risen, and that the practice of making gratuitous grants has been found to be injurious to the colonies, and not beneficial to the settlers themselves, when they are of that rank in life to which discharged soldiers must belong. The result of the experience on this subject cannot be more clearly stated than in the accompanying extract of a Report from the Commissioners of Emigration to the Secretary of State, and of a notice which the Commissioners published for the information of persons in the working classes, proposing to settle in the British possessions in North America. After maturely weighing all the circumstances of the case, Mr. Secretary Spring Rice has come to the opinion, that it would be inconsistent with the attention due to the interests of the colonies to continue the practice of granting lands to discharged soldiers, and that this conclusion is equally applicable, whether they obtain their discharge elsewhere and are removed to the colonies in which land has usually been given, or whether they are discharged in those colonies themselves. I am, therefore, to request that you will move the Secretary at War to enter into communication with the General commanding in chief, upon the steps which should be adopted for making the present decision known to soldiers about to be discharged, and for conveying the necessary directions to general officers commanding on foreign stations.

Soldiers discharged in Canada were admitted so early as the year 1829, before the arrangement became general, to the indulgence of receiving grants of land; but it is not proposed that they should be excepted from the measure now to be carried into effect.

In conclusion, Mr. Spring Rice would observe, that reluctant as he must have felt