

—No. 14.—

(No. 12.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from Lord *Aylmer* to Lord *Goderich*, dated  
Castle of St. Lewis, Quebec, 25 January 1833.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Viscount Howick's despatch of the 26th of August last, in which was enclosed a copy of a letter addressed to his Lordship by Mr. Gough, containing complaints of the treatment experienced at Quebec by emigrants and pensioners arriving from England, I have now the honour of transmitting, for your Lordship's information, the statements of Mr. Commissary-general Routh and Mr. Buchanan, the resident agent for settlers and emigrants in Upper and Lower Canada; to whom, as being the public officers more particularly concerned, Mr. Gough's letter of complaint was referred for explanation.

The statements of Mr. Routh and Mr. Buchanan so completely embrace the subjects of Mr. Gough's complaints, that I should, perhaps, unnecessarily occupy your Lordship's time were I to add to them any observations of my own. I think it, however, due to those public officers to state, that their exertions in the discharge of their public duties are so zealous and unremitting as to leave no doubt in my mind that Mr. Gough is in error on the subject of his complaints, in so far as it affects their respective departments. Mr. Buchanan is unremitting in the discharge of his duties regarding the emigrants and settlers; and Mr. Routh, in addition to the time and trouble bestowed by him in attending to the payment of the balances claimed by pensioners on account of their commutation allowance, has on many occasions incurred serious responsibility in making payments to them in the absence of the necessary documents.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *Aylmer*.

Lord Aylmer to  
Lord Goderich,  
25 Jan. 1833.

## Enclosure, No. 1.

Sir,

Commissariat, Canada, Quebec, 25 October 1832.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that I have given all attention to the despatch referred to me, addressed to his Lordship the Governor-in-chief from the Colonial-office, with the enclosure from Mr. Gough, representing the hardships experienced by the commuted pensioners in consequence of the delay in the settlement of their claims on their arrival at Quebec.

The peculiar nature of the trade of this country causes the arrival simultaneously of a great number of vessels, probably in the month of May, to the extent of 600 or 700 sail. Thus within a few days of each other 300 or 400 or more pensioners have been landed at Quebec, and as the orders for their payment are transmitted *via* Halifax, by the English packets, a more circuitous route than the direct voyage by the river St. Lawrence, it occurs generally that the men arrive before their orders reach this office. I have never, however, suffered this unavoidable delay to extend to the pensioners, who have been paid as soon as they could be examined and identified with their instructions; but amongst many claims some must be paid first, and some last; the business must proceed in rotation; my responsibility is not limited exclusively to this branch, nor could I abandon all other duty for this service only; but I gave up three and sometimes more days in each week, with the whole assistance of my office, to these payments. The number that could be paid daily would depend much on their examination, on the consistency of their statements, and the documents in their possession, averaging from 35 to 50, and to obviate delay, a justice of the peace sat in the office to administer the necessary affidavit. It will readily be admitted, that in the absence of the orders, when they did not reach me before the arrival of the pensioners, that these payments could not be made without caution and system; yet, with all the care that could be given to it, many over-payments were the consequence. The improvident habits of the men, their intemperance and recklessness of conduct, increased every difficulty to which by circumstances they were subjected. The cholera which afflicted them visited also the department, and contracted my assistance; the very service itself, by over-constant communication in heated rooms with the class of men, exposing us to receive the disorder.

But to leave general observation, I advert particularly to the cases cited by Mr. Gough.

The widow Fairclough presented herself here on the 22d May; she had no marriage certificate, but obtained the affidavit of one witness to the fact. She had no certificate of the death of her husband, but which was procured on the 5th of June; all these documents being prepared for her in my office. The War-office letter, 50,949, did not state the sum for passage and outfit advanced to her at home, but which she stated (though unsupported by any document) to have been 40 *l.* sterling. She was detained until the arrival of the May mail, in the expectation that the order for her husband's payment might reach me. The mail arrived on the 18th June, but unfortunately without this order. This was the period that the cholera was most intense: all business was more or less interrupted, nearly all the