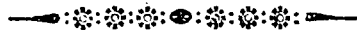


REPORT

On London District Division.



The select committee to whom was referred the bill for dividing the District of London, with instructions to consider and report whether it would be more advisable under present circumstances to divide the said District, or to remove the District Town to some more central position; and in either case to report what site would be the most eligible for that purpose, have considered the matters referred to them, and have agreed to the following report:—

Although the District of London is extensive, comprehending many Townships, which must eventually contain a very great population; yet your committee are not of opinion that its extent is such as to render a subdivision necessary, merely upon that ground. Had there been any insuperable objection to removing the District Town from its present situation, your committee would have considered it a necessary consequence that the District should be divided, because the distance of the western sections from Vittoria, is so great, that the inconveniences of attending courts from thence, and the expense of serving process in that quarter, are evils too serious to be suffered to continue; but there being no Town of any magnitude at Vittoria, and the public buildings there having been destroyed by fire, since the signing of the petition upon which the bill referred to the committee was brought in, it appears to your committee, that there is now no sufficient reason for retaining the District Town at a place so near one extremity of the District. It will be seen that by removing it to a situation perfectly central, no inhabitant of the District would have more than 45 miles to travel to reach the District Town, and there would, therefore, be as little reason to complain of inconvenience on that head, as in any other District of the Province. By retaining the District undivided, the advantages of an undant Treasury, applicable to purposes of local improvement, must speedily be felt—the present incumbrances upon its funds will soon be discharged, and your committee are convinced that the District of London, remarkable as it now is for the excellence of its soil and climate, and its flourishing settlements, will soon become one of the first in the province, in respect to its public means, and the respectability of its local jurisdictions and institutions.

To obviate present inconvenience and render any future alterations of its boundaries, the less necessary, the committee recommend that the Townships of Walpole and Riahham, should be annexed to the District of Niagara, and that so soon as any part of the territory now unsurveyed between the present settlements and Lake Huron, shall be organized, a line extending westward from the north-east angle of the Township of Zorra, until it strikes the shores of Lake Huron, shall form the northern boundary of the District.

It appears to your committee that the most eligible site for the District Town, taking every circumstance into consideration, is the reservation for a Town Plot in the Townships of London and Westminster, near the forks of the River Thames. It is not exactly central, but very nearly so, and combines altogether more advantages, in the opinion of your committee, than any other situation in the District.

Your Committee further recommends, that, to insure the immediate erection of a suitable Gaol and Court House for the District, an additional one-third of a penny in the pound shall be raised by assessment, and that five Justices of the Peace of the District, be appointed Commissioners with power to borrow upon the credit of the District funds, the sum of £3000, and to contract for and superintend the erection of the said building, upon the proposed site of the new District town. Your Committee think that it would be desirable to nominate a majority of the Commissioners from among the Justices of the Peace living in the County of Middlesex, as they could more effectually, and at less inconvenience to themselves, afford the necessary superintendence, and that one of the Justices residing in each of the other counties, might be properly added.

They have prepared drafts of bills to be delivered in with this report, for effecting the several objects suggested in it; they have not inserted the names of any gentlemen as Commissioners for the purpose last mentioned; but they take the liberty to suggest the nomination of the Honourable Thomas Talbot, Mahlon Burwell, James Hamilton, Charles Ingersol, and Francis L. Walsh, Esquires, as gentlemen under whose direction they have no doubt the measure will be judiciously carried into effect.

In conclusion, your Committee beg leave to suggest, that as Vittoria unfortunately no longer affords the necessary accommodation for the administration of justice, there appears to be no reason why the several courts should not, without further delay, be held in a situation more convenient for the inhabitants of the District, and they have made provision accordingly in the draft of a bill herewith submitted.

The evidence taken by your Committee, and annexed to this report, will show the reasons which have influenced them in the opinions they have formed.

All which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN B. ROBINSON, *Chairman.*

Committee Room, January 9th, 1826.

Thursday, December 22d, 1825.

The Committee met.

The Attorney General in the chair.

Read the order of the House appointing the committee.

Bill read for erecting Middlesex into a separate District.

The petition of Ira Schotfield, and other inhabitants of the County of Middlesex, read

James Mitchell, Esquire, called in and examined.

In what part of the District of London do you reside, and how long have you been an inhabitant of the District?

In the township of Charlotteville, where I have lived since the year 1807.

What situations do you hold in the said District?

Judge of the District Court and several other small offices.

You have read the petition for erecting the County of Middlesex into a separate District: do you think such a measure advisable or not, and on what grounds?

I think it is at present inexpedient, owing to the state of the funds. There is still a considerable debt due for the Gaol and Court-House, and I have always thought that the County of Middlesex ought to pay its proportion of that debt.

The Gaol and Court-House being at present destroyed, does any good reason remain for retaining the District town at a place so near one extremity of the District?

I think the Gaol and Court-House cannot be said to be destroyed—the walls are not materially injured—a contract has been entered into for putting on a roof—the funds to be subscribed by individuals—no estimate has been made of the expense required for putting it again into a good state of repair; but I have heard persons say that it might be made much better and more secure than before for an