

Appendix
(Z.)

4th March

&c. and square rigged vessels, are charged £2 5s. currency, extra services included. Vessels that go to Montreal are charged £2 10s. currency, and West India Vessels are charged also £2 10; less however has been charged upon smaller vessels: These vessels give a great deal of extra trouble, of which the Merchants are fully aware, and have heretofore with cheerfulness paid the sum above stated, as being justly appertaining to us, not only by the Halifax docket, but for the extra services rendered.

Q. When did you commence receiving your own fees?

A. In the spring of 1816.

Q. Was it in consequence of a request on your part?

A. Yes: previous to 1816, the waiters and searchers' fees were received at the Collector and Comptroller's desk, but in consequence of a representation at home, an order was sent out that the waiters and searchers should receive their own fees, under the third and fourth columns of the Halifax docket.

Q. Can you inform the Committee if a deduction has been made in consequence, by the Collector and Comptroller?

A. I cannot, not having access to their books.

Q. What was the amount of fees received for you at the Collector's desk, previous to your receiving them yourself?

A. From a settlement with the late Mr. Scott, the Comptroller, I found that £1 4 6, sterling, was allowed to the Waiter and Searcher on each case arising from the third and fourth columns.

TUESDAY, 3d March, 1824.

Mr. Bélanger in the Chair.

Frederick East, Esquire, Naval Officer for the Port of Quebec, appeared, and was examined.

Q. What was the Fee claimed by the Naval Officer, at the Port of Quebec, previous to the year 1816, on the entering and clearing of Vessels, what Fee has been claimed by the Naval Officer since that period, and please to state if the Fees have been increased; by what authority the increase has been made, and the amount of such increase?

A. The Fees claimed by the Naval Officer, previous to the year 1816, on the entering and clearing of vessels, was 5s on the entry, and 5s on the clearing of square rigged Vessels, and half the above sum on Schooners and Sloops. The fees subsequent to the above period have been doubled, and claimed agreeably to the opinion and advice of His Majesty's Advocate General, as being the amount the Ordinance regulating the Naval Officer's Fees intended that Officer was entitled to receive. **RESOLVED**, That the Letter of Mr. Young, late Comptroller of the Customs, for the Port of Quebec, be communicated to the Honorable M. H. Perceval, if he requests it; and that he be required to produce to this Committee with all possible despatch, Copy of the correspondence to which the said Letter of Mr. Young refers.

WEDNESDAY, 3d March 1824.

Mr. Bélanger in the Chair.

Mr. John Bruce, first Clerk to the Collector of the Customs for the Port of Quebec, was called in and examined:

Q. 1. How long have you held a situation in the Custom House?

A. Nearly ten years.

Q. 2. By whom were you first employed, and in what situation?

A. By the late Comptroller, Mr. Scott, as his Clerk.

Q. 3. Had Mr. Scott been long in the situation when you were first employed?

A. I do not know exactly, probably about a year.

Q. Do you know if there was any alteration in the Fees exacted at the Custom House, by any of the Officers, between the time of your being employed, and the death of Mr. Scott?

A. There has been no alteration in the table of fees during that period. Since 1816, the fees of the Collector and Comptroller only, as stated in the first and second columns of the tables, have been received at the Collector's desk. The Waiters and Searchers since that time, have received their own fees, under the third and fourth columns of the table.

Q. 5. Has there been any alteration since?

A. The table remains the same. In 1817, a fee of ten shillings for a general certificate was established; and a further fee of five shillings for a certificate to cancel a bond, by virtue of an order from the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, and from the Honorable the Commissioners of His Majesty's Customs.

Q. 6. What check is there over the Officers, to prevent them from taking other or higher fees than are allowed?

A. The fees of the Collector and Comptroller are entered daily in their fee-book; and I believe the Waiters and Searchers keep separate books, in which they enter the fees received by them.

Q. 7. Are those entries submitted to the Collector or Comptroller for their particular inspection, or are they open to the public; and are the different items of the receipts, and the names of the persons from whom the fees are received, mentioned?

A. The books are open for the inspection of the Collector and Comptroller, when they please. I do not know that the public have ever asked to see them. The amount paid for the entrance and clearance of each vessel is entered opposite to the respective names of the vessels; but the items are not detailed. The fees received on documents required by individuals, are entered from the day-book, stating the whole number of each.

Q. 8. In what capacity were you employed at the Customs while Mr. Young was acting Comptroller?

A. As his Clerk, until October 1822.

Q. 9. Do you recollect having made any observations to Mr.

Young, at any time, respecting fees exacted at the Custom House, greater than those authorized by the Halifax docket; and will you have the goodness to repeat that observation, if any such occurred, as nearly as you can recollect?

A. I consider that any observations which may have taken place between Mr. Young and myself, when I was employed by him, as addressed to him alone.

Q. 10. Do you recollect having made use, to Mr. Young while he was Comptroller, of expressions to the following import: "If I leave the Custom House, and am employed by a merchant, or go into business on my own account, I shall not pay you the fees you now receive?"

A. I never said so.

Q. 11. Are the new fees of ten shillings and five shillings stated in your answer to the fifth question, paid by the merchants, or masters of vessels?

A. I believe the general certificate is to be paid by the master of the vessel; and the certificate to cancel bonds, being required by the Merchants, is paid for by them.

Charles Grey Stewart, Esquire, Inspector for the Act of Navigation, and waiter and searcher at the Port of Quebec, again appeared before your Committee, and was examined as follows:

Q. Are you the officer through whose hands Warrants to load and unload pass, and are such Warrants ever granted to the masters of the vessels besides those obtained and paid for by the merchants?

A. I am one of the officers through whose hands the Warrants to load and unload pass. It has not been the practice generally to grant the masters a Warrant to unload, the officer in charge having a knowledge of the fact, by the masters delivering to him a manifest of his cargo, corroborated by the Report Book inwards; however, had either of the Searchers required from the master the certificate in question from the Collector and Comptroller, it would have been immediately granted; when the master enters his vessel outwards, he makes a general entry, and gives the Bonds required by law; a sufferance is then granted to him by the Collector or Comptroller, which he hands over to the Waiter and Searcher in charge, and pays to him one shilling and nine-pence for his entry and cocket.

Q. Does not the exporter pay for the cocket at the time that he obtains his warrant to load, and does the master of the vessel get any other cocket than the one obtained for, and paid by, the merchant?

A. The exporter pays for his entry and cocket at the time he obtains his Warrant or Sufferance to load. I am not aware of any charge being made to the master, however, I beg leave to remark, that when a Merchant makes his entry outwards, he, in general, inserts all the articles of export, and perhaps only ships but two or three of them, the cocket therefore made in the first instance by the Collector and Comptroller must be cancelled by another, in conformity to the Searcher's certificate or indorsation on the sufferance.

Q. Are certificates of report either inwards or outwards, ever granted to masters of vessels?

A. Not generally, but the Searchers have at all times immediate communication of the fact, as stated in the first question.

Q. Did you not act for some time as Comptroller of the customs at this port?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Will you explain to the Committee what is the nature of the record made at the Custom House, on the entrance and clearance of vessels under the item of "new Register and recording the same," for which a fee of 17s. 4d. sterling is exacted, and is there any other authority than the docket for recording such Register?

A. All vessels that obtain Registers at this place are recorded in a Book for that purpose, provided by the honorable Board of Commissioners of the Customs, London, wherein the names of the owners, and also the description of the vessel as given by the certificate of the Surveyor of the navigation Act, are entered. The Collector and Comptroller charge the fees as stated in the first and second columns of the Halifax docket.

Q. Is the charge of 17s. 4d. sterling, made on the entrance and clearance of vessels under the head "Recording Register" the same as that authorized by the docket for "New Register" and recording the same, and upon what authority is that charge made on all vessels entering and clearing at this port?

A. I am not aware whether the 17s. 4d. that is charged upon the recording of a new Register, is applicable to the recording of all vessels that enter and clear, but which is done in the inward and outward Report Books, and afterwards, by the Collector and Comptroller, transmitted home quarterly. No charge is made by the Waiters and Searchers.

The Honorable M. H. Perceval produced to the Committee, in conformity to its order of yesterday, copy of the correspondence referred to in the letter of Mr. Young, laid before the Committee on the first instant, and which will be found in the Appendix under the letter B.

Thomas Ainslie Young, Esquire, again appeared before the Committee, and requested that the following Affidavit should form part of the proceedings of the Committee:

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