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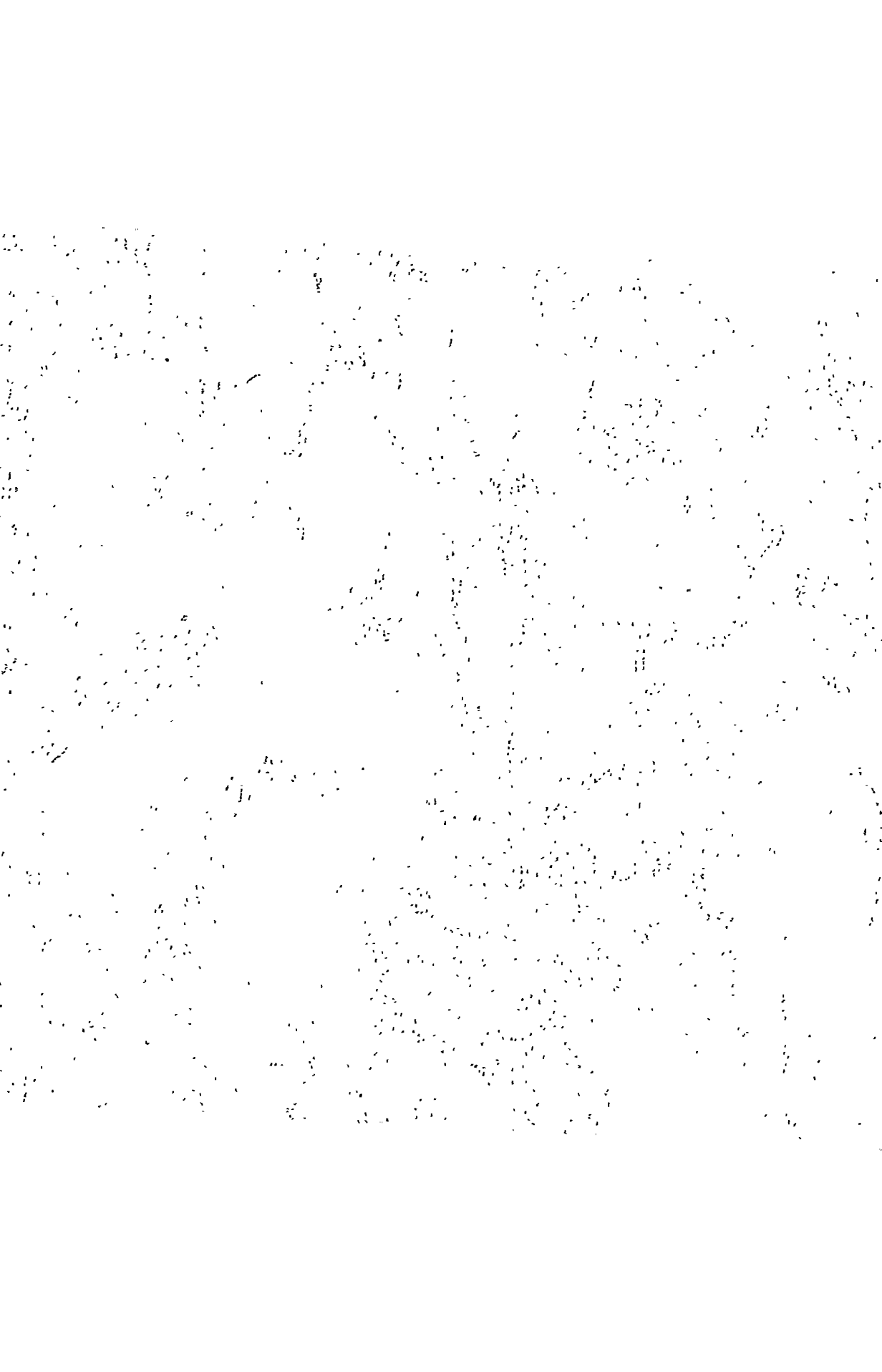
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REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

FOR

ASCERTAINING THE LOSSES

OCCASIONED

BY THE

L A T E F I R E S

IN

NEW-BRUNSWICK.

FREDERICTON:

PRINTED BY G. K. LUGRIN, KING'S PRINTER.

1826.

THE
NEW BRUNSWICK
MUSEUM

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REPORT.

The following Report of the Commissioners, for ascertaining the losses occasioned by the late Destructive Fires, is Published by order of His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor.

To His Excellency Major-General Sir HOWARD DOUGLAS,
Bart. Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the
Province of New-Brunswick, &c. &c. &c.

The Report of the Commissioners, appointed to enquire into the losses sustained by means of the Destructive Fires in this Province, in the month of October 1825, under the Act of Assembly, 7th Geo. IV Chapter I.

A competent number of the Commissioners in Pursuance of your Excellency's direction, have made the examinations required by the Act, in the immediate neighbourhood of the Fires in three different parts of the Province, where the greatest destruction occurred, namely at Miramichi, at Fredericton, and on the River Oromocto.

In conducting these examinations the Commissioners required the party who had sustained the loss, or the agent of such party, to specify under oath the losses actually sustained, and this statement to be corroborated by two credible persons, neighbours of the party, or otherwise possessing means of information on the subject, who were required to declare under oath, their belief of the losses having been actually sustained as stated by the applicant—and in order to facilitate, and expedite

their proceedings, the Commissioners caused Blank forms of examination to be printed, one of which is hereunto annexed for your Excellency's information—This form has been pursued with but very few exceptions, which will appear in a list of Special Cases, hereinafter referred to.—

The Commissioners being anxious to give full effect to all the safeguards against imposition, provided by the Legislature, were careful during the examinations to promulgate the clauses of the Act, which render false swearing in any of these examinations liable to the pains of perjury, and which exclude from any share in the Charitable Funds, any claim which shall appear to have been intentionally made, for the purpose of obtaining more than a just compensation; and they have the satisfaction to state, that but one instance has occurred, in which they have found it necessary to exclude a claim on this ground.

The Commissioners thought it proper to fix the sum of twenty pounds, as the limit below which they would receive no proof of loss—on the principle that where the loss did not amount to this sum, the applicant would in all cases have received full relief from the distributions already made.

No proof of loss was admitted, arising from the destruction of Timber or Wood standing in the Forest from the obvious impracticability of ascertaining it with precision, although such losses were sustained to an immense amount.

The examinations having been completed, the Commissioners all repaired to Fredericton, in pursuance of Your Excellency's requisition, and according to the directions of the Act; H. G. Clopper, Esq. having been in the latter stage of the examinations, appointed by your Excellency a Commissioner in the room of the Honorable George Shore, who had been compelled to resign in consequence of the pressure of the other Public duties, rendering him unable to continue his attention to the business of the Commission.

The result of these examinations, appear in the several lists of cases in the respective Districts, annexed to this report in which are detailed the names and occupations of the sufferers, and the loss sustained by each, as proved before the Commissioners.

From the Miramichi list, it appears that the losses proved in that District, were as follows:—

50 Merchants and Traders,	£71,208	0	7½
117 Mechanics,	20,478	10	7
6 Professional Men,	4,978	2	8
244 Farmers;	68,048	17	5½
30 Lumberers,	6,031	9	2
73 Labourers,	7,014	3	5
21 Tavern-Keepers,	10,123	9	3
28 Widows and Single Women,	5,358	8	6

£193,539 1 8

From the Fredericton list, it appears that the losses proved there, being principally from the Conflagration within the Town. (with some cases from the Country) were as follows—

16 Merchants and Traders,	£12,302	16	11
22 Mechanics	6,934	10	11
2 Professional Men,	1,432	15	2
3 Farmers,	610	2	6
8 Lumberers,	1,329	18	10
11 Labourers,	1,263	7	0
2 Tavern-Keepers,	2,368	11	6
3 Widows and Single Women,	551	18	6

£26,794 1 4

From the Oromocto list, it appears that the losses proved in that District, were

24 Farmers,	£5,481	14	3
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There is also annexed to this report, a list of Special cases not proved in the regular form, which the Commissioners nevertheless recommend as proper to be included in the distribution of the Funds, at the disposal of your Excellency.

This list contains the following cases from the County of Charlotte.

6 Farmers,	£1,187	4	0
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It not having been thought necessary for the Commissioners

to repair to that part of the Country, these cases are substantiated to their satisfaction, by the certificates of Magistrates, and other well known respectable individuals, acquainted with the circumstances of the respective cases.

There are also on the list, the following cases from Miramichi, which from circumstances explained to the satisfaction of the Commissioners, the parties did not prove in the usual manner, but which they are satisfied are entitled to relief, viz :—

1 Widow,	£21	15	0
1 Lumberer,	70	0	0
2 Farmers,	975	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£1,066	15	0
Total Special Cases,	2,253	19	0

It is proper to add, that the foregoing statements do not include all the losses sustained; some individuals who suffered did not come forward to prove their loss. Several Public Buildings were also destroyed, and three ships in the River Miramichi, which are not included in the above amount, besides the very great destruction of private property in the Forests.

It being a part of the duty of the Commissioners, prescribed by the Act of Assembly to present to your Excellency, together with the losses, a scheme for the distribution of the Funds placed in your hands, for the relief of the sufferers, and remaining undisposed of. There have been laid before the Commissioners by your Excellency's directions, as data for enabling them to form such a scheme, a statement of the Funds remaining for distribution, and statements from the principal scenes of distress, of the sums and supplies already received and distributed in the respective districts. By an account laid before the Commissioners and annexed to this Report, it would appear that there is now about £20,000 for distribution as your Excellency shall be pleased to direct. It is to be observed, however, that the precise amount of the Subscriptions in England, has not yet been ascertained, and returns are not yet received from all the Counties in this Province, of the Subscriptions made therein.

The Commissioners suppose, that your Excellency will think it proper to direct an accurate, and complete account of all t

various donations and contributions to these charitable funds, and of the manner in which the same have been disposed of, to be published as soon as practicable.

From Statements made by the Miramichi Committee, it appears that up to the 1st of June 1826, there had been received as follows :—

Amount of Supplies from Halifax, exclusive of money per Invoice,	£2,567	18	0
Ditto from Quebec, (freight included)	5,157	8	11
Ditto from St. John, N. B. St. John, N. F. St. Andrews, and other parts of the Colonies, without Invoice,	4,600	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£12,325	6	11

Amt. of Cash from Halifax,	£650	0	0
Do. Central Committee,	250	0	0
Do. Yarmouth,	150	0	0
Do. Liverpool, England,	2,000	0	0
Do. Annan,	33	11	7
Do. Alloa	93	0	0
Exchange on £2,126 11 7.	236	5	8
	3,412	17	3
	<hr/>		
	£15,738	4	2

Add this sum received from Glasgow, Bristol, N. Shields, and Sunderland, per letter of Secretary of Miramichi Committee, £1,496 Sterling,	1,662	4	5
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Amt. of draft in favor of Mr. Joplin, on the Province Treasurer, to enable the Miramichi Committee to purchase Grass Seeds,	400	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£17,800	8	7

They appear to have expended as follows :—
Relief granted to 3,540 Sufferers.

	<i>Stock.</i>	<i>Cash.</i>
	£12,015	£1,781 17 0
Paid balance of Debt contracted by the old Committee, after expending the sums subscribed at Miramichi,		175 10 0

Paid contingent expenses,		527	0	0
Balance in hand,	310	6	11	928
				10
	£12,325	6	11	3,412
				17
				3

This Committee also state that upwards of six thousand pounds were expended in the relief of that class of Sufferers whose distresses arose from the loss of employment, and inability to leave the place; their loss of property by the fire, not exceeding in most cases Twenty Pounds each.

The following statement of the Fredericton Fund is made by the Central Committee:

Total amount of Subscription list,	£632	16	10
Not yet paid,	78	1	4
Add Donation from St. John,	300	0	0
Potatoes &c. from Clare, N. S. exclusive of a			
quantity sent to the Oromocto,	35	12	4
Flour and Fish from St. John,	15	16	6
	£906	4	4
Disbursed by the Committee to 20th June, 1826,	832	2	4

Balance, £74 2 0

The following statement has been made by the Oromocto Committee:

Subscriptions in the County of Sunbury, for the relief of the sufferers on the Oromocto and its branches, the greater part of which has been collected and distributed,	£470	4	2
Supposed amount received from St. John, in Clothing Provisions. &c.	300	0	0
Cash received from Central Committee,	50	0	0
	£820	4	2

The Commissioners now proceed to make suggestions to your Excellency, for the proper distribution of the remainder of these extensive charities, which have excited the most grateful emc

tions throughout the Province, and tell so much, both for British and American Benevolence.

The Commissioners sensibly feel the responsibly, which dwells upon all concerned in this distribution, to dispense the bounty for the purposes contemplated by the donors. Although the law has authorized the Commissioners, to ascertain all the losses which were sustained from the calamitous fires that caused such sweeping desolation; it does not follow that every individual who came forward to prove a loss, is therefore either entitled to, or wished to obtain a portion of the charity.

There can be no doubt, indeed, that many persons proved their losses principally with a view of showing the amount of loss sustained.

The ruling principle in the distribution of every donation, must be the intention of the donor; and in the present case, it is conceived, that there are many persons whose losses have been proved before the Commissioners, who are not of a description of sufferers, that any of the donors intended to relieve by their contributions. The Commissioners think that the actual and individual distribution of the charity, can only be duly made upon a knowledge of the circumstances and condition of each sufferer, and therefore must be performed by local Committees, who possess, or may easily obtain this knowledge, upon such principles, and under such regulations, as your Excellency may think it proper to lay down for their guidance; and that the duty of the Commissioners in this particular, is obviously and necessarily confined to suggesting general principles of distribution, for the consideration of your Excellency, in whose hands, and under whose control, the Funds have been placed for disposal.

The Commissioners in the first place, recommend that there be reserved from immediate distribution, a sum that will enable your Excellency to make provision for persons who have been made widows, or orphans, or become maimed and disabled by means of the fires, and for other destitute cases that may not be included within the examinations of loss of property, or that may be proper objects for future and continued relief.

It appears to the Commissioners, under a view of all the circumstances, that £18,000 is a proper sum for immediate distribution, and that the remainder of the Funds on hand, together with any other monies that may be hereafter received, should be reserved by your Excellency, for the purposes just mentioned.

The next object of the Commissioners, is to suggest a just and proper apportionment of the sum for distribution among the several places where the destruction occurred.

To do this with exactness, the Commissioners have found impracticable, because in their opinion, such an apportionment ought not to be founded merely on a comparison of the amount of losses sustained in the different places, but upon the character and condition of the sufferers, and the means they still possess; and it is obvious, that where such a variety of circumstances must form the ingredients of determination, an approach to truth is all that can be expected.

In order to approximate as nearly as possible, to a just and proper apportionment, in their view of the subject, they have made a comparison of the amount of losses sustained in the different places, by those classes of sufferers, among whom in their apprehension, will be found by far the greatest number of cases, that are proper objects of the charitable donations, and have made such a comparison, the basis of their apportionment—and these classes are, *Farmers, Labourers, Lumberers, Mechanics, Widows, and Single Women.*

From the allotment that might fall to each district upon the above principle, they have thought it right to deduct the respective sums, that appear by the statements laid before them, to have been already received in each place.

With respect to Miramichi in particular, it appears that £17,800 has been received there, but as it is stated by the Miramichi Committee, that £6,000 of this amount has been expended among a class of sufferers, whose loss of property by the fire, has not been examined into by the Commissioners, and who therefore do not form an ingredient in the above comparison; the Commissioners, have deducted this sum from the amount received at Miramichi, leaving the sum of £11,800 charged to them in making the apportionment. Whatever portion of this sum thus received at Miramichi, may have been contributed exclusively for that district, it has nevertheless by so much reduced the wants there as compared with the other suffering districts, and therefore, in the opinion of the Commissioners, ought obviously to be taken into account by your Excellency, when making an equitable distribution among all the sufferers, for whose relief the bounty has been placed in your hands.

Upon these principles, the statement will be as follows:—

AMOUNT OF LOSSES PROVED BY THE FIVE CLASSES LAST
ABOVE MENTIONED.

Miramichi, £108,068. Fredericton, £10,687. Oromocto
and Charlotte, £6,668.

AMOUNT OF RELIEF ALREADY RECEIVED IN THE DISTRICT.

Miramichi, £11,800. Fredericton, £984. Oromocto and
Charlotte, £953.

AMOUNT NOW ALLOTTED.

Miramichi, £15,500. Fredericton, £1,700. Oromocto and
Charlotte, £800.

TOTAL RELIEF.

Miramichi, £27,300. Fredericton, £2,684. Oromocto and
Charlotte, £1,753.

The Commissioners therefore recommend, that the above
mentioned sum of £18,000 be apportioned as follows:—

Miramichi,	£15,500
Fredericton.	1,700
Oromocto and Charlotte,	800
	<hr/>
	£18,000

The losses on the Oromocto, and in the County of Charlotte,
being all of the same class, namely, that of Farmers, are placed
together for the convenience of distribution.

Although the Commissioners for the reasons stated, have adopted
the amount of losses sustained by the five classes in that be-
half above mentioned, as the basis of the calculation, upon which
they have made their apportionment, they do not mean to recom-
mend that the other classes who have proved losses, should be
altogether excluded from the charity. There will doubtless be
found cases in all the classes that are proper objects for relief

But as already suggested, they think that the particular distribution can only be made under your Excellency's directions, by local Committees, who will have knowledge of the condition, and circumstances of each individual, and will of course in every case take into account the particular amount of relief that may have been already dispensed.

The Commissioners are clearly of opinion, that of all the classes of sufferers, the Farmers, or those who depended on the cultivation of the soil for support, are deserving of the most favourable consideration. Persons of this class beginning in the wilderness, have accumulated their means under severe privations, by hard labour and slow degrees, and the fruit of years of patient industry, is swept away from them in an instant. They have now the same laborious process to go over again, under circumstances of infinite disadvantage, arising from the very devastation which has caused their ruin.

All which is respectfully submitted

for your Excellency's consideration.

(Signed)

WARD CHIPMAN,
HARRY PETERS,
RICHARD SIMONDS,
THOS. H. PETERS,
H. G. CLOPPER,

Commissioners.

Fredericton, 24th June, 1826.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

TO THE FUND FOR RELIEF OF THE SUFFERERS

BY THE GREAT FIRE IN NEW-BRUNSWICK,

7th October, 1825.

HIS MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY,

1,400

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS IN AND ABOUT FREDERICTON.

	£	s.	d.
His Excellency Major-General Sir HOWARD DOUGLAS, Bart. Lieut. Governor, &c. &c. }	110	0	0
His Honor the Chief Justice,	30		
Hon. Judge Bliss,	30		
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Mrs. Shore,	10		
Hon. Thos. Baillie,	30		
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Capt. Ferguson, “	11	2	2
Mr. Wetheral, “	2	2	8
Lieut. Gunning, “	2		
Cockroft, “	2	2	8

Capt. Love, 52nd Regt.	-	-	-	£2	2	8
Lieut. Hill,	"	-	-	2		
Vivian,	"	-	-	2	2	8
Doctor Gibson,	"	-	-	5		
Mr. Amasa Coy,	-	-	-	5		
Mr. John Harding,	-	-	-	5		
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" George Pedolin,	-	-	-	5		
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" John Woods,	-	-	-	1	10	
" Richard Wharton,	-	(Kent)	-	1		
" Charles McPherson,	-	-	-	1		
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Henry Hooper,		10	8	R. Hannah,	1	
G. M'Kenzie,		15		Ed. Dunn,		10
R. M'Kay,		5	4	S. Wormwood,		16
Hayden & M'Lean,	1	12		B. Churchill,		16
C. Boyes, Jun.		16		J. Hearney,	1	
Joseph Green,		10		James Floyd,	1	
John Kinney,	1					

FEMALE SUBSCRIPTIONS.

	£	s.	d.
Nancy Cunliffe,	1	10	
Maria A. Bull.	1	5	
Sophiah Smith,		12	6
Elizabeth Upham,	1		
Martha Upham,	1		
Polly S. Raymond,		14	
Emily Smith,	1	5	
M. G. Smith,		10	
Sarah Beardsley,	1		
Matilda L. Beardsley,		5	
Polly Dibblee,		6	
Mariah Jane Dibblee,	1	5	
Mrs. John Bedell,	1		
Mrs. F. Dibblee,	1		
Mrs. Rice,		15	
Nancy Rice,		15	
Mrs. Griffith,		10	
Mrs. E. Smith,		15	
Ann Bedell,		15	
Mrs. John Bedell, Sen.	1		

Parish of St. Mary's.

	£	s.	d.
Archibald M'Lean, Esq.	25	0	0
Patrick Campbell,	4	10	0
James Stewart,	4	10	0
Alexander Campbell,	4	10	0
Gershöm Bunnel,	4	10	0
John Manzer,	4	10	0
James Harrison,	6	0	0
Donald Fraser,	4	10	0
Peter M'Laggan,	9	10	0
John M'Donald,	4	10	0
Henry Henley and mother,	1	0	0
Alexander M'Laggan,	1	0	0
Amos Arnold,	0	10	0
John Clayton,	3	0	0
William Smith,	1	0	0
Thomas Gill, Sen.	0	10	8

Parish of Prince William,

Parish of Kent,

County of Sunbury.

470 4 2

Queen's County,

King's County, Parish of Kingston,

45 5 0

" Springfield,

10 7 4

" Westfield,

15 7 4

" Do.

13 17 0

" Norton,

23 0 0

" Sussex,

59 7 6

County of Westmorland,

County of Charlotte,

St. Andrew's and St. George,

538 19 2

St. Stephens,

286 19 4

City and County of St. John, *about*

5,000 0 0

NOVASCOTIA.

	£	s.	d.
Halifax,	3,217	18	0
Clare,	143	13	4
Yarmouth,	150	0	0

LOWER CANADA.

Quebec and Montreal, includ- } ing Provincial Grant. }	£5,157	8	11
Three Rivers,	50	5	0
Sherbrooke,	101	5	0

UPPER CANADA.

York,	£412	2	8
Niagara,	116	13	3
Major Leonard, late 104th Regt.	24	8	10½

Saint John's Newfoundland,
Prince Edward Island,

BERMUDA.

Collection in the Church of St. George,	£17	10	0
Subscription of one day's pay by } the Troops and Department, }			

GRANTS OF PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES.

Lower Canada,	£2,500	0	0
Upper Canada,	1,000	0	0
Nova Scotia,	1,000	0	0
New-Brunswick,	5,000	0	0

DONATIONS FROM THE UNITED STATES.

Boston, exclusive of Sundry	}	-	Dols.8,000
Shipments of Provisions, &c.			
New-York,		-	6,994
Philadelphia,		-	2,300
Do. Society of Friends,		-	2,410
Eastport,		-	£93 7 4

SUBSCRIPTIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	£	s.	d.
London,	5,294	6	10
Liverpool,	2,000	0	0
Glasgow, Bristol, North Shields & Sunderland,	1,496	0	0
Greenock,	487	5	0
Edinburgh,			
Aberdeen,			
Alloa,	93	0	0
Annan,	33	11	7
Newcastle upon Tyne,			
Northium, Sussex,			
Plymouth,			
Lord * * * * *	100	0	0