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MONTREAL.

COPIES OF EXTRACTS of any DESPATCHES
from the Governor-General of Canada to the
Secretary of State for the Colonies, and of his
Replies, respecting the Conduct of the RE-
TURNING OFFICER of Montreal during the
late Election.

(*Mr. Roebuck.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
6 March 1845.

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M O N T R E A L.

RETURN to an ADDRESS of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 18 February 1845;—for,

COPIES or EXTRACTS of any DESPATCHES from the Governor-General of *Canada* to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and of his Replies, respecting the Conduct of the RETURNING OFFICER of *Montreal* during the late Election.

Colonial-office, Downing-street, }
4 March 1845.

G. W. HOPE.

— No. 1. —

(No. 162.)

Copy of a DESPATCH from the Right Hon. Sir *Charles Metcalfe*, Bart. G.C.B. to Lord *Stanley*.

No. 1.
Governor Sir C.
Metcalfe to Lord
Stanley.
28 October 1844.

Government House, Montreal,
28 October 1844.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to submit for your Lordship's information the copy of a Report from Captain *Wetherall*, stipendiary magistrate, detailing the proceedings that took place during the two days of polling for members to represent the city of *Montreal* in the new Parliament.

I consider that the preservation of the peace, and of the lives and property of the inhabitants, is in no small degree to be attributed to the admirable arrangements of *Mr. Young*, the returning officer, and to the efficient services of Captain *Wetherall*, a most valuable public servant.

The polling proceeded throughout without interruption, notwithstanding the repeated attempts made to disturb it; and I feel that it will be as gratifying to your Lordship to learn, as it is to me to state, that no life has been sacrificed.

Great credit is due to the troops employed, both officers and men, for their temperate and judicious conduct; and I am of opinion that without their assistance, neither the peace of the city could have been maintained, nor the free exercise of their franchise secured to the voters, in consequence of the inroads made by the labourers, non-voters, who are congregated upon the public works in this vicinity.

I have, &c.

(signed) *C. T. Metcalfe*.

Enclosure in No. 1.

EXTRACT of a REPORT from Captain *Wetherall*, Stipendiary Magistrate at MONTREAL, addressed to the Provincial Secretary; dated Lachine Police Office, 26 October 1844.

Encl. in No. 1.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to state for the information of the Governor-general, that a few days previous to the nomination of candidates to represent the city of *Montreal*, I was called on by the returning officer to assist him in making arrangements for the preservation of the peace of that city.

I felt it my duty to comply with this request, and I beg now to report the occurrences which took place under my observation, as well as the general arrangements during the two days of polling.

2 PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE LATE ELECTION, MONTREAL.

The polling booths were fixed in the centre of streets running at right angles with two great thoroughfares. Strong barriers were erected at the polling booths to prevent the collision of the contending parties, there being an understanding between the candidates, made at the suggestion of the returning officer, that their respective voters should approach the polling booths at the opposite ends of the street.

At each booth two magistrates and a strong body of special constables were posted, to assist the deputy returning officer in maintaining peace.

In this order all the polls were opened.

I was occupied throughout the two days in continually visiting the several polling places, and in no instance except that hereinafter mentioned, did I perceive any difficulty whatever to the free and peaceable access of voters to the polls.

Two days previous to the polling, information reached the returning officer that bodies of strangers were expected from the Gore of Chatham and Quebec to endeavour to carry the election by violence, and arrangements were made to prevent them, if possible, from entering the city.

I can confidently assert that no bodies of men came from the former place, as I had placed police on the road and at the landing-places to ascertain the fact. Two hundred men, however, apparently Irish labourers, arrived in Montreal in the steam-boat "Charleroi," from Quebec.

* * * * *

On the morning of the first day of polling an unusually large body of strangers, evidently Irish labourers, congregated in M'Gill-street, one of the largest thoroughfares, and flanking the streets leading to the polling-booths in the Queen's Ward, one of the principal wards in the city.

Amongst these people I recognized a large number of labourers from the Lachine Canal, non-voters; and it was very evident from their manner and local disposition that they meditated an attack on the booth, with a view of taking and keeping forcible possession of it,—a plan which they had successfully practised at the last election for Montreal.

Shortly after the poll was opened an attack was made by these people on the voters of Mr. Moffatt, who had assembled near the poll, at the Queen's Ward, in the street assigned to them, and the deputy returning-officer found it necessary to call in the troops.

The riot was speedily repressed, and the troops were retained in the vicinity of the poll to allow free access to it, and prevent further rioting.

Polling continued throughout the day uninterruptedly.

On the close of the poll on the first day an attempt was again made by the labourers to create a disturbance by attacking the voters of the opposite party, which was again checked.

The labourers finding their object defeated, returned to the canal, and in passing through Griffon Town demolished the windows of a Wesleyan chapel, besides committing various other depredations.

During the night it was thought necessary to place detachments of troops in different parts of the town, to protect the property of individuals of both parties who had taken prominent parts in the election.

On the second day the polling commenced at the usual hour, and continued without interruption.

Early on that day I received information from the police stationed on the line of canal that agents for Mr. Drummond had proceeded along the line of canal, stating to the labourers (many of whom had returned to their work), among other inflammatory matter, that "the Tories had burned the Recollet (an Irish Roman-catholic church), and that their comrades had been abused and were bleeding in the streets, and urging them to proceed to Montreal immediately.

A party amounting to between 300 and 400, many of whom were armed, marched in military array, with scouts and flankers, on Montreal, augmenting their numbers as they proceeded; this body made their appearance at the foot of M'Gill-street, and continued their march in the direction of the polling-place in the Queen's Ward; and refusing, on the commands of the magistrates, to halt, the Riot Act was read, and the cavalry directed to disperse the crowd, and assist the civil power in the capture of as many as possible. Thirty men were arrested and committed to gaol.

Although I believe that the several deputy returning-officers found it necessary to require the presence of troops in the vicinity of their respective polling-places, yet they were not called upon to act offensively except in this instance, and then, I am happy to say, without any loss of life or serious injuries being inflicted.

The same military protection of property was afforded during the night on the requisition of the returning officer, and was continued until the final close of the election, and the city now remains in a state of apparent tranquillity.

There can be no doubt that riot and bloodshed to a frightful extent would have ensued, and the election could not have been proceeded in, but for the admirable and humane arrangements of the returning officer, and the timely and temperate interference of the troops.

In proof of the necessity for military assistance in this contest, I would remark that Mr. Drummond spoke to me a few days previous to the election on the propriety of commencing polling under military protection, a measure to which the returning officer would not consent until all ordinary means had failed, and in no case was military aid resorted to until then.

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In conclusion, I would remark that every effort and arrangement was made by Mr. Young, the returning officer, to ensure the preservation of order and the free access of voters to the polls, which he succeeded in effecting without the loss of a single life.

* * * * *

I have, &c.

(signed) *C. Wetherall, J.P.*

Stipendiary Magistrate in charge of
Public Works.

Hon. D. Daly,
Provincial Secretary, Montreal.

— No. 2. —

(No. 308.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from Lord *Stanley* to the Right Honourable
Sir *Charles Metcalfe*, Bart. G.C.B.

No. 2.

Lord Stanley to
Governor Sir C.
Metcalfe.
16 November 1844.

Sir,

Downing-street, 16 November 1844.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch (No. 162), of the 28th October, enclosing the copy of a Report from Captain Wetherall, stipendiary magistrate, detailing the proceedings which took place at the recent election of Members to represent the city of Montreal in the new Parliament.

You will signify to the returning officer, Mr. Young, and Captain Wetherall, my approbation of the efforts so successfully made by them for the preservation of the peace of the city on that occasion.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Stanley.*
