

Item: Letter from J.F.W. DesBarres to Lord George Germaine, London, furnishing plans with estimates submitted on the 'Utility of Nova Scotia,' and a scheme relating to forestry, shipping, etc., to include Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence

Call Number: MS-6-7 - Box-folder 2.1

Additional Notes:

Covering letter is written to Richard Cumberland requesting he submit the enclosed plan to Lord George Germaine. The title 'Utility of Nova Scotia' is written on the back of the document.

Photocopies of originals located in SF-12-21.

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1935



Tobacco Square 1 Oct 6 1779

Dear Sir

Your readiness to give your assistance in any plan tending to promote some public good, will, I am assured, plead in my excuse for the Liberty I take to trouble you with the perusal of the enclosed Sketch, and should my imperfect ideas meet with your more mature notions, I would further beg leave to hope for the very valuable favour of your pen, at your leisure, to give them that shape & animation necessary for their appearance before my Lord George Germaine for his Lordship's consideration & patronage. I am with my best wishes to you & family

Dear Sir

Richard Cumberland Esq.

Your most obedient and  
most obliged humble servant  
J. P. D. B. M.

1933

1.

[of "Academia Nova"  
Vol II 1935] W.M.

The many excursions I had occasion to make into the interior Parts of His Majesty's North American Territories while employed as an Engineer and, since, on the Survey of the Coasts & Harbours have suggested to me the following Proposals, which, if carried into execution, I humbly apprehend, will be attended with very high benefits to the public.

Nova Scotia abounding with excellent Harbours and navigable Rivers, more numerous than in ten times the same extent of Coast to the Southwards, is most happily situated for Commerce in general, and, from their eastward position, for the West India Trade in particular, as Ships may thence shape their Course immediately for any of those Islands, while sailing from Boston, New York, &c., they are obliged to stand so far eastward as Halifax, to head the westerly Currents, or prevent falling to leeward of the Ports to which they are destined. And to this that all Ships in their return home to Europe, from any of the Southern Parts of America, are obliged to approach the Coast of Nova Scotia before they can stretch to the Eastward & must ever be liable to be intercepted by Cruizers in time of War. The Fishing Banks, which surround almost the whole

Province



1933

2.

Province must prove an inexhaustible source of Wealth and a valuable Nursery of hardy Seamen. The fertile Vales & Marshlands being well adapted for the Culture of Hemp & Flax, and the Country in general being covered with vast Forests of Trees fit for Naval Uses, may with the greatest certainty furnish, at the King's own disposal, permanent Reservoirs of Timber for Frames, planks, masts, yards, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> materials for Cordage, Sails, and other military Stores on which the Construction of Ships of War chiefly depend.

To that End it is humbly proposed, That His Majesty be pleased to order a reservation of various well wooded Tracts of Land adjoining or in the Contiguity of some of the Commodious Harbours or navigable Rivers best qualified for the intended purpose, on the Coasts of his loyal Dominions of Nova Scotia, Cape Breton Island & Canada. One Acre of Land well clothed with wood is generally computed to bear 50 Tons of Timber; but, as a considerable part of it is unfit for the purpose of Ship-building, and that many Heath & Swamps must unavoidably be included within the limits of such reserved Tracts, let it therefore be estimated at the rate of 10 Tons per acre only: A Reservation of 6,000,000 Acres will yield 60,000,000 Tons of Timber fit for Construction, and allowing

97  
60,000,000

allowing one hundred Years for the full growth of  
Trees, it being the nature of woodlands in the Northern  
Districts of America, where trees are cut down -  
others spontaneously to arise and supply their -  
place: The above 6,000,000 acres, may furnish  
a yearly supply of 60,000,000 Tons of Timber, which  
is a quantity sufficient to build as many Tons  
of Shipping.

Logans

only  
2.

That Application be made for his Majesty's  
pleasure to raise a Corps of Foresters, Axmen &  
Pioneers, (for which purpose the annexed Estimates are  
submitted) to be commanded by intelligent Officers  
well acquainted, not only with ~~the~~ Military -  
Duties, but also with Surveying and capable of  
laying out and directing the Mens labours in -  
felling the Trees, opening roads of communication  
through the woods to convey the Timber to the appointed  
Landing places, building Bridges & Causeways over -  
Rivers & Swamps, erecting Block Houses, Store Houses,  
Barracks, Forts & Posts of Defence wherever necessary  
for the security, <sup>Protection</sup> of His Majesty's Territories &  
loyal subjects, as well as for the immediate Shelter &  
accommodation of the <sup>officers &</sup> men employed on this  
beneficial service. By this means, the Corps  
proposed, being kept in discipline, would -

undoubtedly



undoubtedly, by a regular method of proceeding, be enabled to perform more business, and at an expense infinitely less to the public than labourers hired by the day, & have the unavoidable disappointments and losses flowing from interruptions or delays. And those being skilled in the military-exercises to serve as Rangers, Light Infantry, Pioneers, &c.<sup>or</sup> Such a Corps, might, at the present juncture and on all future Emergencies, be found more useful, from the peculiar knowledge both Officers & Men would have of the Country, than any equal number of other regular Soldiers employed in its Protection or Defence.

In order further to extend the above national Advantages & benefits arising from the execution of these proposals, by facilitating the delivery of the said Timber into the Dockyards of Great Britain upon much more reasonable Terms than can be obtained from any other part of the world, I would beg leave to recommend the building of Ships in the several Harbours where the Timber is procured as complete as would be necessary, to convey a load of Timber across the Atlantic, and upon such Constructions as may answer the Plan of our Frigates or 60 Gun Ships, wanting only to complete them for



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them for service, warlike stores together with such rigging, sails, &c., exclusive of Masts & Yards found them in America; As it would be less expensive to fit out Vessels, merely for the purpose of a passage, with an inferior proportion of sails & rigging both in quality & size, part of which could be procured from the damaged old stores returned by the men of war into the Yards of Halifax, &c. or left, in exchange for new stores, on other Stations in America. Many other expensive articles might be saved, and materials of wood might answer where iron and more durable materials become necessary for completing men of war, which could be supplied on the arrival of the Hull from America by being taken, for a short time, into the British Docks in order to be perfected for the services of War.

Freight & the Hire of Vessels has always been a great and heavy article of expence in estimating the value of Timber from foreign parts to this Kingdom, which, by this Measure, would, in a considerable degree, be saved to the State. The Expence of freight is an increased charge upon the Timber which makes no return of profit to the Nation; whereas, altho' building ships for that purpose may exceed the mere expence of freight, it furnishes the full value of  
the expence



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the expence, as it would sell for more money, at a merchant's yard, than it costs Government. So that the Timber would, in fact, be conveyed from America to England free of all costs.

This is the more practicable, because artificers - could easily be found in America as they are accustomed to build Vessels in almost every Port or navigable River tho' hitherto of small size, but remarkable for their perfection. Such Men therefore could be had at a very short notice upon reasonable terms, and the Vessels built would be mostly manned by the Offspring of the inhabitants residing or employed by His Majesty in the districts of the Harbours where the service of furnishing Timber is carried on.

The Balance of commerce upon articles of Naval Stores, Maths, &c. being much in favour of the Northern Countries, a vast sum of money is left in the hands of Foreigners; whereas the whole ~~disbursement~~ ~~the~~ ~~pro~~ expence, attending the proposed mode of supplying Great Britain with Timber, would remain & fluctuate in the hands of His Majesty's Subjects in Nova Scotia and Great Britain.

And whereas a proportion of fertile Land - must, in the course of the above duties, become cleared and partly fitted for the purposes of Agriculture it is

humbly





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humbly proposed that His Majesty be pleased to grant the Officers, Artificers & Men of the intended Corps, by way of encouragement or reward certain quantities of Land in such Situations as may be judged most proper, expedient and advantageous to the public, viz:

To each Field Officer ————— 5000. Acres

Captain ————— 3000. ———

Subaltern, Adjutant, & <sup>2</sup>Master ————— 2000. ———

Chaplain & Surgeon ———

Cadet ————— 1000. ———

Sergeant ~~Artificer~~ ————— 200. ———

Corporal, Artificer or Drummer 100. ———

Pioneer ————— 50. ———

and that each noncommissioned officer, artificer or Pioneer after three years faithful Service, shall be entitled to claim his allotment of Land, together with his discharge provided he finds a fit man in his place, Or at the end of five years, without finding a man to replace him; Or that he shall in either case continue enrolled on the Books of the Corps and be liable to be called into actual Service upon any emergent Occasion of insurrection, rebellion, or invasion, He receiving his usual Pay during the time of actual Service; By this measure a valuable Nursery of loyal and military Subjects will be acquired and established for the permanent Security, defence & Protection of His Majesty's Dominions and the Service of Government.



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Estimate of the Expence of a Provincial Corps of Foresters, Axemen, Pioneers, &c<sup>ra</sup>, to serve in Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, and the Gulph of S<sup>t</sup>. Lawrence; Consisting of 1000 Men, Officers included. Proposed to be raised, and rendered fit for Duty one half in Six Months and the whole within the Course of the year.

1	Colonel, Inspector General and Surveyor of His Majesty's North American Woods and Forests &c <sup>ra</sup> .....	£ 1 .. 4
1	Lieutenant Colonel, Deputy Inspector General & Surveyor &c <sup>ra</sup> .....	— " 17 .. 6
1	Major & Director, .....	— " 15
7	Captains & Surveyors, .....	3 " 10 —
1	Captain Lieutenant & Extra Surveyor, .....	— " 4 " 8
21	Lieutenants & Assistant Surveyors .....	4 " 18 —
9	Ensigns & Overseers, .....	1 " 13 —
1	Adjutant, .....	— " 4 " 8
1	Quarter Master, .....	— " 4 —
1	Chaplain, .....	— " 6 " 8
1	Surgeon, .....	— " 4 " 8
2	Notes, .....	— " 7 —
20	Cadets, to do Duty as Supernumerary Officers, Draughts-men, Overseers, and in order to Stimulate the Exertion of Genius to be on a Certainty of Promotion in proportion to their Diligence and Abilities, .....	2 " ... —
40	Serjeants, .....	3 " ... —
40	Corporals, .....	2 " ... —
20	Drummers, .....	1 " ... —
20	Foresters, who being well acquainted with the Qualities and Value of Timber will be employed to range the Woods, to mark the proper Trees and to point out such remedies as may prevent their decay, or remove the Obstructions to their Growth, .....	2 " ... —
10	Miners & Masons, to blow up the Rocks on the Roads, build Sewers for Draining & repair foundations for Bridges &c <sup>ra</sup> 1/6 .....	— " 15 —
80	{ Carpenters for constructing Bridges, Block Houses, &c <sup>ra</sup> } 1/6 Shipwrights	6 " — —
10	Blacksmiths, for repairing the Tools broken in the Service 1/6 .....	— " 15 —
10	Wheelwrights, for keeping the Carts & Wheelbarrows in repair 1/6 .....	— " 15 —
703	Axemen and Pioneers .....	23 " 8 " 8
1000 Officers included, 4 Day .....		56 " 2 " 10

Plumum £ 204 87 10 10



1933

Estimate of the Expence of a  
 Provincial Corps of Foresters, Ax-men, Pioneers, &c.  
 to serve in Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, and the Gulph  
 of St. Lawrence: consisting of 600 Men, Officers included  
 Proposed to be raised, and rendered fit for Duty one half  
 in Six Months & the whole within the Course of the  
 Year.

1	Colonel, Inspector general and Surveyor of His Majesty's North American Woods & Forests, &c.	1	4
1	Lieutenant Colonel, Deputy Inspector General & Surveyor, &c. <sup>ra</sup>	17	6
1	Major & Director,	15	—
2	Captains & Surveyors,	1	—
	at 10/		
1	Captain Lieutenant, & Extra Surveyor,	4	8
11	Lieutenants & Adjutant Surveyors,	2	11
	at 4/8		
4	Ensigns & Overseers,	14	8
	at 3/8		
1	Adjutant,	4	8
1	Quarter Master,	4	—
1	Chaplain,	6	8
1	Surgeon,	4	8
1	Mate,	3	6
10	Gadets, to do Duty as Supernumerary Officers, Draughts-men, Overseers, & in order to stimulate the Exertion of Genius to be on a certainty of Promotion in proportion to their Diligence & Abilities	1	—
	at 2/		
20	Serjeants	1	10
20	Corporals,	1	—
10	Drummers,	10	—
10	Foresters, who being well acquainted with the Qualities and value of Timber, will be employed to range the Woods, to mark the proper Trees and to point out such remedies as may prevent their decay, or remove the Obstructions to their Growth	1	—
	2/		
5	Miners & Masons, to blow up the Rocks on the Roads, build Sewers for Draining & prepare foundations for Bridges &c. <sup>ra</sup>	7	6
	1/6		
10	Coopers, for constructing Bridges, Black Houses &c. <sup>ra</sup>	3	—
	1/6		
5	Blacksmiths, for repairing the Tools broken in the Service.		
5	Wheelwrights, for keeping the Carts & Wheelbarrows in Repair	7	6
	1/6		
150	Ax-men & Pioneers.	15	7
600	Officers included ad. ff. Day	32	5

Planum L 11783 8.4

