

The Memorial of Colonel Alexander W. Light of the 25th Reg^t of foot
and Captain Philip Graham of the Royal Navy To His Excellency Sir
Francis Bond Head &c &c and Executive Council

Your Memorialists have humbly to represent the following statement which
they trust Your Excellency and Council will take into your favorable consideration
as your Memorialists believe they are the only Officers who have been so peculiarly
situated, since the establishment of this colony.

They beg to state that when they received their grants of land in the year 1833.
Location tickets were given to them, (see N^o 1 & 2) as to all other officers, free of any other
reservation, than to build their houses &c. on which they should receive their title deeds.
When your Memorialists found there were aliens established on their grants, who
had no right to be there, the case was stated to the Commissioner of Crown lands and
the Surveyor General, who were aware of it, and who informed your Memorialists
that these would be ejected by the order of Government free of any expence to your
Memorialists; in consequence they were induced to build on such lands substantial
houses, which they would have hesitated doing, had they been informed that they
were to pay the expences to be awarded to such aliens, or known that such ground was
totally exhausted; it would have been their duty to have represented the injustice of
their case to the then Lt Governor, and the injury inflicted on your Memorialists for
the encouragement of Men who had long since reaped the benefit of their illegal
tenure; But of which your Memorialists then being ignorant they paid the amount
awarded to each squatter without any remonstrance, as they then erroneously thought
that these cleared lands, would have subsisted your Memorialists and their families
by their culture, for which they came to the Canadas; but now they find that these lands
are quite exhausted, without fences, and not capable of affording the least return,
but loss, for the great outlay they have expended on them they now humbly submit
their case to Your Excellency and Councils candid consideration, as your Memorial
ists are assured that the Government itself, at the time, were not aware of the real
state of the case, that these lands from exhaustion, would not repay the labor of
tillage they were therefore necessarily unconscious of the injury inflicted on your
Memorialists, when they ordered them to pay the squatters.

Your Memorialists humbly conceive also that it was not sufficiently considered
that these aliens in general come to the Canadas to escape the hands of justice from
the United States, and should a crisis of danger arise, to a man would unite against
the Government. They cannot conceive therefore why a feeling should have existed
in favor of such men to the injury of old officers, who were grants of land for long
and trying services, in which one of your Memorialists has twice severely suffered
in the cause of that country, which these very men, would, at fit opportunity, revolu
tionise and subvert, whilst the occupation of their illegally obtained locations, cost
them absolutely nothing but their labour to clear, the full profit of which, with cost of
good fences, would have been returned the second year; and how much more must
such men have realised, when without incurring any expence in the purchase of
grants, refusing to pay taxes, or to perform statute labor, they have forced the crops
without judgement or discussion for more than twenty years, whilst a short time
previous to your Memorialists arrival, they would have disposed of their several
chances for the smallest consideration.

Your Memorialists have also to state that they were recommended to proceed to the
Blandford Township, to induce a more respectable settlement in these inland parts than
heretofore, as they with Captⁿ Drew were the first settlers, and it has succeeded beyond
example in the colony, and principally by their exertions, there being now 124 Gentlemen
and Ladies of considerable capital from Britain, and from these a great number of
Mechanics and Stone Keepers, to the great increase of Woodstock, were induced to settle
there; which they believe would not otherwise have come; in consequence any ground belong
ing to Government was freely offered to them, without any reservation in favor of squatters.

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58a It is also essential to the right understanding of your Memorialists claims to state that Mr. Castles who was sent by the Government authorities to examine into the demands of these aliens, was one who like your Memorialists had lately arrived from England, being ignorant of agriculture, could be no judge of the great deterioration of the ground by the rushing and long continued culture of these men, reckless of consequences and necessarily had the experience of the peculiar nature of the case, that such grounds even with good fences, of which these were wholly deficient, were not worth any more acceptance, and that they are especially so in this State, for this very purpose. And also the authorities who conceived these men were entitled to remuneration, most unfortunately for your Memorialists, had never seen, nor could surmise, the wretched tenure by which they hold their location, nor the consummating expiring manner in which they set at defiance all immigrants who have any knowledge of agriculture to covet or purchase their clearances without ruin. Had these circumstances been at all known or considered into, they would not have been deemed entitled to receive one farthing's remuneration, who instead of being rewarded for the great injury of old officers should have been prosecuted for the irreparable damage committed by them, when, as they settle, to the extinction of the valuable pine and cedar trees, from ten to twenty thousand of which have been cut down and sold for rails to their neighbours, which last a century, whilst they surrounded their own clearances with temporary rails requiring to be removed every two or three years, and with the reckless cultivation of taking wheat crops after crops, till the ground can produce no longer, and is quite worn out, they prevent the possibility of immigrants, having common sense, being induced to buy their locations from Government's thus they insure a residence to themselves indefinitely, without any fear of being ejected, and positive that no one could drive their miserable possessions they remain for ever masters of the soil.

Your Memorialists humbly conceive also that the peculiar method that wild lands are so cheaply cleared and fenced have been overlooked by the authorities, as the crops on good land always repay the outlay the second year, with this consideration they would have rejected any idea of remuneration to men who were already more than amply repaid, who guarantee their own security, without fear, as they know, that to fence land alone, subsequent to the destruction of the immediate timber appropriated for that purpose, costs more, from the expense of the loading & labor to erect them, than to buy clear, and fence new land, and they were well aware, that to fence lands like theirs, which had been twenty years in forced crops, none but the most ignorant would attempt, to obtain crops not worth cutting down, whilst new land could be bought, cleared, fenced and cultivated for a much less price than your Memorialists have paid, producing 40 bushels an acre, and remunerating considerably more, than all the expenses the second year, whilst to pay to fence and cultivate those of the squatters, would be absolute ruin, from the following well authenticated facts:

When they engage to clear land, first cut down a stipulated number of acres as required, on the wester side of these, where the fence is to be erected, they chop down the elm, bass, cherry and other trees, in a line, and quite contiguous to the intended fence, they then at once split the trees into rails, and put up the fence, which so quickly done at the time, gives little trouble, and requires no loadings in this there is very little extra labor besides clearing. Thus the undrained ground is chopped, fenced and cultivated for 12 dollars an acre.

But it is widely different with your Memorialists, from these squatters clearances being mostly without fences, except rather one for some useless, and they cannot buy

58b rails, to be split, led, and erected, under twenty dollars a thousand, independently of burning the rotten logs of some farms, which require considerable labor and expense, so that your Memorialists had paid to pay four or five dollars an acre for the squatters lands unfenced, with one exception, they were compelled to buy useless houses furniture &c. to go to law, notwithstanding they have a letter to say that the refractory squatters should be ejected by the proper authorities, dated September 27, 1833 (see letter N^o 3) two squatters by name Levi Perry and George Coleman would not abide by any arbitration, and in fact from being ejected, your Memorialists had to pay for these the sum of \$26, and therefore rather than pay this sum for each of these squatters, for they all were refractory, they would not quit unless all their houses furniture &c. was bought, your Memorialists were obliged to comply with their demands: And when they began to cultivate a small part of their best lands, the crops were not worth cutting down, whilst Colonel Light was compelled to pay for nearly double the quantity of cleared land, and at wide distances apart, that it is at any time possible in this country for one person to have in cultivation, because the labor or investment of more than on 100 acres of cleared land, even undrained, will not in general repay the labor and expense sufficiently, and ten fold more so as in Ireland, where there is no certain and immediate market. They cannot even let it without fences, and even if let, would be still more deteriorated: consequently the greater part lies a barren waste of no earthly use to your Memorialists, except that they unfortunately occupy the whole front of their locations leading to the rest of the civilized world, and without which, they would be lost in the backwoods.

Your Memorialists humbly pray therefore that your Excellency and Council will give them that satisfaction for these expenses which they are assured could never have been contemplated by the authorities, that officers should unnecessarily suffer both injury or ruin; more especially as they understand, that since such charges have been incurred by your Memorialists, before they could obtain their deeds, an order has been decided upon, to annul any such demand to officers in future, which supports their claim the more, as this shows the order has been subsequently thought unjust, but which they were compelled to accede to, contrary to their expectations or wishes. With large families dependent upon them which cannot be supported by cultivating such lands, which give no return, on the attempt of doing which your Memorialists are already such sufferers, that they are prevented cultivating their wild lands, which they would have done, had not such heavy demands been required, and in attempt to further improve those of the squatters, would be perfectly useless and ruinous, as may be seen from the great loss they have already incurred (see account No. 2), with an account proving that if the same sums were expended on their wild lands, they would have cleared above 400 acres by this culture, and also possess twice the number of acres they now have, in cultivation, of the squatters.)

Your Memorialists also complain of the following charges which they were made to pay contrary to their expectations, and which they humbly conceive, if properly considered, they ought not to have paid. When Mr. Castles was sent by order of Government to survey the line, situated between East and West Oxford, which was to be divided between Col. Light and Capt. Graham, it was asserted by the Surveyor General and the then Lieut Gov. to contain 1500 acres, although Col. Light declared, from every enquiry he had made, it did not contain more than about 1000 acres, and on actual survey by order of Government (see 70th Castles affidavit N^o 5) it was proven to contain only 979 acres. Col. Light was first given 300 acres on the north side of the Thames river, and 700 acres on the south side, the remainder of 79 acres was given to Capt. Graham. But in September 1833 (see letter N^o 6), and long after the Survey, Capt. Graham was informed by the Surveyor General

that he could not receive any part of the land, as it had been previously sold, and Mr. Castles applied to Government for the expense of the survey, this was acceded to by the Governor previous to Mr. Castles going to England, see his letter of 15th October 1834 N^o 7, and refused on his return in June 1835 by the order of D. Sturgeson see letter N^o 8, and your Memorialists were in consequence compelled to pay Mr. Castles the expense of the survey and for men employed by him. Your Memorialists have here to remark, that had not Capt. Graham been promised a part of the land from the idea that it contained 1500 acres it would have been quite unnecessary that any survey should have been made, as it was well known by Col. Light and fully stated by him to the Government, that there was sufficient ground for all he required, so that this survey and expense was in no way required by your Memorialists. And as an example that the expense of survey has been granted to Officers even when made for their own benefit, which this assuredly was not, they beg to state that Capt. Drew obtained a part of the town plot of Woodstock, the cost of the survey of which was paid by the public.

Mr. Castles was also ordered by Government to arbitrate for the squatters on your Memorialists lands, but when he applied for his expenses, this was also refused, and they had not only to pay for lands that were quite exhausted, and which they now find, with regret, do not near return the actual outlay, but they had to pay also for Mr. Castles arbitration (see his and Mr. Sullivans account N^o 9)

Your Memorialists conclude by declaring that they come to the Canadas to gain a living by their own and families exertions in agriculture, which they find they cannot do by cultivating the squatters clearances, for which they were made to pay by order of Government without ruin, as their means have been expended to pay their demands before they could quit, which they believe would not have been sanctioned, had the authorities been at all aware of the injustice of the case, proven in their accounts (N^o 4 on page 344)

Your Memorialists therefore humbly pray that their case may be taken into favourable consideration, that the outlay so uselessly expended by them, may be returned to them, that they may cultivate their wild lands, to be enabled to subsist their large families, and your Memorialists will ever pray

Attest, Light Colonel (late Lt Col 25 Regt)
P. Graham Comdr R. N.

Your Memorialists loss is as follows, Paid to Squatters by Col Light	£ 310 13 9
Loss sustained in cultivating 56 acres of Squatters & 25 acres of meadow not belonging to the squatters used as pasture in river flats, with Mr. Castles and Mr. Sullivans accounts, for measuring the land, arbitrating for, and ejectment of Squatters see N ^o 9, a copy of.	263 14 9
Total loss by Col Light	£ 574 8 6

Paid to One Squatter by Captain Graham	37 10 0
Loss sustained in cultivating 12 acres of the Squatters	55 0 2 2
For expense of Mr. Castles arbitration	7 0 0
Total loss by Captain Graham	£ 99 10 2 2
The amount of both your Memorialists loss is £ 673 18 8 2.	

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The decision of
His Majesty's Government
they cannot therefore
recommend any
part of the Petitioner's
Claims & your Excellency
favours the same.

W. M. G. M. G.

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Communicated to His Majesty's
25th February 1837.

See list of names of
Petitioners

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