

[GOVERNMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN, 1766] [1]

[6 George 3]

[Church brief authorizing a charitable collection  
for victims of the Montreal fire of 1765]

[1] BRITISH  
MUSEUM  
Church Briefs  
B. VI. 8  
6 George III

[2 July 1766 Letters Patent in response to the petition of John Thornton, Fowler Walker and Jonas Hanway, Esquires. Authorizing a house to house collection in the parishes of Great Britain on behalf of the sufferers in the Great Montreal fire of 18 May 1765, and appointing deputies to supervise the collection.]

George the Third by the Grace of God of Great Britain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith &c.

To all and singular Archbishops Bishops Archdeacons Deans and their Officials Parsons Vicars Curates and all other spiritual persons

and To all teachers and preachers of every separate Congregation

and also To all Justices of the peace Mayors Sheriffs Bailiffs Constables Churchwardens Chapemwardens Headboroughs Collectors for the poor and their Overseers

and also To All Officers of Cities Boroughs and Towns Corporate

and to All other our Officers Ministers and Subjects whomsoever they be as well within Liberties as without

To whom these presents shall come Greeting

Whereas it hath been represented unto Us as well upon the humble Petition of John Thornton Fowler Walker and Jonas Hanway Esquires for and in Behalf of the Sufferers by Fire at Montreal in the province of Quebec

as by a Certificate of his Excellency the Honourable James Murray our Governour of that province under the Seal of the said province

That on the Eighteenth of May in the fifth Year of Our Reign happened a most dreadful and rapid Fire at Montreal aforesaid which in the Space of about Three Hours consumed One hundred and Eighty Dwelling Houses inhabited by Two hundred and fifteen Families with their Merchandize Furniture Wearing Apparel some plate and paper Money to the Amount of Eighty seven Thousand five Hundred and Eighty pounds eight Shillings and Ten pence Sterling

And That the poor Sufferers are a Loyal Obedient and laborious people and before this dreadful Accident were recovering from the Calamities of War and the Suspension of their Trade and well inclined to assist each other

but so Many of them are now reduced to the utmost Distress that if not relieved by their Fellow Subjects here Many Families will be unavoidably involved in and exposed to the greatest Misery

Wherefore the said poor Sufferers have joined together and most humbly besought Us to grant unto them our most gracious Letters patent License and protection under Our Great Seal of Great Britain to empower them to ask collect and receive the Alms Benevolence and charitable Contribution of all our Loving Subjects from House to House throughout England the Town of Berwick upon Tweed and our Counties of Flint Denbigh and Radnor in Wales

Unto which their humble Request We have graciously condescended not doubting but that when these presents shall be made known to our loving Subjects they will readily and chearfully contribute To the Relief of their poor suffering Brethren

Know ye therefore That of our especial Grace and princely Compassion We have given and granted and by these our Letters patent under our great Seal of Great Britain We do Give and grant

[1]

[1] [Library and Archives Canada, R16735-0-6-E, MG21-ChurchBriefs-B.VI.8.-6Geo.III, Volume number: 1. Copied c 1881-1914 by a Canadian official from an original now in the British Library (to be obtained). "Bound with Add. MSS. 6865, 15491, 24322, 24323 in a volume entitled 'Miscellaneous Papers.' " "For further information, see also MG 21, Add. MSS. 35915." LAC reproduction no e011215480, 2025-6-5. This source shows one long block of text, so for reading convenience this edition divides it into paragraphs with what would have been the likely section numbers in the margin.]

unto the said Petitioners and to their Deputy and Deputies the Bearer and Bearers hereof (authorized as is herein after directed) full power Licence and Authority to ask collect and receive the Alms Benevolence and charitable Contribution of all our loving Subjects within all and every our Counties Cities Towns Boroughs Hamlets Cinqueports districts parishes Chapelries and all other places whatsoever from House to House throughout England our Town of Berwick upon Tweed our Counties of Flint Denbigh and Radnor in Wales for the Relief of the said poor Sufferers

[2] And therefore in pursuance of the Tenor of an Act of Parliament made in the fourth year of the Reign of Queen Ann intituled *An Act for the better collecting Charity Money on Briefs by Letters Patent and preventing Abuses in relation to such Charities* [2] Our Will and pleasure is and We do hereby (for the better Advancement of these our pious Intentions) require and command all Ministers Teachers and preachers Churchwardens Chapelwardens and the Collectors of this Brief and all others concerned That they and every of them

observe the Directions in the said Act contained and

do in all things conform themselves thereunto

and that when the printed Copies of these presents shall be tendered

unto you the respective Ministers and Curates Churchwardens and Chapelwardens and

to the respective Teachers and preachers of every separte Congregation and

to any person who teaches or preaches in any Meeting of the people called Quakers

that you and every of you under the penalties to be inflicted by the said Act do receive the same And

you the respective Ministers and Curates Teachers and preachers and persons called Quakers are by all persuasive Motives and Arguments earnestly to exhort your respective Congregations and Assemblies to a liberal Contribution of their Charities for the purpose aforesaid And

you the Churchwardens and Chapelwardens together with the Minister or some of the substantial Inhabitants of the several parishes and Chapelries and of all other places whatsoever within all and every our Counties throughout England our Town of Berwick upon Tweed our Counties of Flint Denbigh and Radnor in Wales are hereby required

to go from House to House upon the Week Days next following the publication of these presents to receive from the Inhabitants their Christian and charitable Contribution and

to take the Names in Writing of such as shall Contribute thereunto and the Sum and Sums by them respectively given and indorse the whole Sums upon the said printed Briefs in Words at Length and subscribe the same with your own proper Hands together with the Name of the parish or place where and the Time when collected and

to enter the same in the publick Books of Account kept for each parish and Chapelry respectively And

the Sum and Sums collected together with the said printed Briefs so indorsed you are to deliver to the Deputies and Agents authorized to receive the same

And We do by these presents nominate constitute and appoint

[3]

The most Reverend Father in God Thomas Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

The Right Honorable Robert Earl of Northington Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain

The Right Honorable Daniel Earl of Winchelsea and Nottingham Lord president of the Council

His Grace the Duke of Newcastle Lord privy Seal

His Grace the Duke of Richmond one of his Majesties principal Secretaries of State

The Right Honorable Charles Marquis of Rockingham first Commissioner of his Majesties Treasury

The Right Honorable Henry Seymour Conway one of his Majesties principal Secretaries of State

Sir Samuel Fludyer Baronet

[2] [Collection of charity money act of 1705, 4 & 5 Anne c 25]

John Thornton Fowler Walker Jonas Hanway  
William Burke John Pownall Peregrine Cust  
Robert Allen Samuel Smith John Marlow  
Robert Macky William Neale Richard Neave  
Edward Payne Andrew Devisme Robert Net-  
tleton and Nathaniel Mason Esquires

Daniel [Va]lais Isidore Lynch John Strettell  
Robert Hunter Francis Rybott Robert Grant  
George Hive Benjamin Price Thomas Steven-  
son and John Stevenson Gentlemen

Trustees and Receivers of the Charity to be col-  
lected by Virtue of these presents with power to  
them or any three or more of them to give Depu-  
tations to such Collectors as shall be chosen by the  
petitioners or the major part of them

And the said Trustees or any three or more of  
them are

to make and sign all necessary Orders for the due  
and regular Collection of this Brief and Ad-  
vancement of the said Charity and

to see that the Monies when collected be paid to  
the said poor Sufferers respectively in propor-  
tion to their respective Losses

[4] And Lastly Our Will and pleasure is That no  
person or persons shall collect or receive any the  
printed Briefs or Monies collected thereon but  
such only as shall be so deputed and made the  
Bearer and Bearers of these presents or Duplicates  
thereof

In Witness Whereof We have caused these our  
Letters to be made patent and to continue in Force  
for one whole Year from Lady Day next [3] and no  
longer

Witness Ourselves at Westminster the Second Day  
of July in the Sixth Year of our Reign. [4]

*Billingsley*

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[3] [25 March 1767 to 24 March 1768]

[4] [2 July 1766]