



In Quarantine: *Life and Death on Grosse Île, 1832-1937*

Educational Resources

Handout 2.3b

Witness Group Reading Assignment

The Canadian Government

Source No. 1

Note to Students:

The following excerpt was taken from part 4 of an account by Pádraig Breandán Ó Laighin entitled *Summer of Sorrow*. A full version of the text is available at

www.ballinagree.freeservers.com/sumsorrow4.html.

"At the beginning of December, 1847, Adam Ferrie, a member of the Legislative Assembly in Montréal and Chairman of the Montréal Immigrant Committee, wrote a ferocious letter to Albert Henry George Grey, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London. The letter was published in pamphlet form and the most damning passages appeared in the press. He claimed that the immigrants had testified that it was the landlords who had sent them off 'defenceless and unprotected.'" (Part 4, paragraph 1)

Source No. 2

Note to Students:

The following excerpts were taken from a commemorative newspaper story from the *Daily Telegraph* by J.A. Jordan, entitled "The Grosse-Ile Tragedy and the Monument to the Irish Fever Victims, 1847." A full version of the text is available at

www.irishhistorylinks.net/Historical_Documents/Grosse_Ile_Tragedy.html.

"The Canadian authorities were hardly less remiss than the British in preparations to meet the terrible emergency before them; although they had equally received ample warning of it. In 1846, Dr. Douglas,

the medical superintendent at Grosse Isle, had repeatedly urged them to get ready for what was coming. The British, Irish, American and Canadian newspapers had almost daily reported and commented on the alarming progress which the famine and pestilence were making.... (Paragraph 1)

"... But all the signs and the warnings of the coming storm were virtually unheeded until it was practically too late. The only additions made to the Quarantine establishment were through the purchase of 50 bedsteads, double the quantity of straw used in former years and the erection of a new shed or building to serve as a hospital and to contain 60 more beds." (Paragraph 2)