

Writing a Despatch to the Colonial Office

You are to assume the role of Governor of Vancouver Island and write a despatch (letter) to the British Colonial Office in December 1857 that attempts to convince the British officials of the important reasons why another colony should be established on the mainland of British Columbia.

Background Information About the Colonial Despatches

The Colonial Despatches are the complete correspondence (letters, reports, documents) exchanged between the British Colonial Office in London and the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. The history of these colonies from 1846 to 1871 is included in the Colonial Despatches, in the words of those directly involved in the governance and development of the land, its resources, and its population. The British Colonial Office would send instructions to the governors of the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, and the governors would report on important happenings and developments in their colonies. Because of the slow rate of communication, a letter from the colonies would not be received in London for three months, and the response would take another three months to arrive in the colonies. The long delay in correspondences caused many difficulties for both the Colonial Office and the Colonial Government. As a result, Governors were often required to make decisions and take action without any advice from the Colonial Office.

Format

Use the format below to write your Colonial Despatch.



Victoria, Colony of Vancouver's Island

*Despatch to London British Colonial Office
From (Your Name) to The Right Hon^{ble} Henry Labouchere
Her Majesty's principal Secretary of State
For the Colonial Department*

December 4, 1857

Sir,

These are the important reasons why another colony should be established on the mainland of British Columbia.

*I have the honor to be Sir
Your most obedient humble Servant
(Your Name)
Governor of Vancouver's Island*