

The Government considered that a point between the Georgian Bay and the river Ottawa in the latitude of Lake Nipissing, would generally meet the first two objects, viz.:—the connection with the existing Railway System of the country.

The third object appeared, at the time the survey began, the one of chief importance, as grave doubts were entertained by many as to the possibility of piercing the long extent of rugged country, believed to exist, with a practicable line for the Railway.

The Government was extremely anxious that a practicable line should be discovered, with as little delay as possible, and in order the more effectually to accomplish this object, the Engineer appointed to conduct the surveys was left untrammelled as to the course to be pursued.

The Government simply decided that the survey should begin in the latitude of Lake Nipissing somewhere between the Georgian Bay and the river Ottawa; the duty and responsibility of finding a practicable line thence westerly devolved upon me.

The distance between the Georgian Bay and the river Ottawa, in the latitude referred to, is in round figures about 100 miles. Lake Nipissing is situated about midway and with its different bays, practically occupies about 50 miles; or about half the whole distance

It was clear that a line for the Pacific Railway, to connect with the Railways of Canada to the south, must pass either to the east or to the west of Lake Nipissing.

Every known source of information respecting the country lying between Lake Nipissing and the northern bend of Lake Superior was fully and carefully consulted by me and all accounts agreed as to the exceeding roughness and impracticability of the country for Railway construction on a line drawn from any point between the Georgian Bay and the west end of Lake Nipissing.

The country on a line drawn up the valley of the Ottawa from a point east of Lake Nipissing, seemed on the other hand much more promising.

I satisfied myself that to attempt the discovery of a favorable line on a moderately direct course from the westerly end of Lake Nipissing to the north side of Lake Superior could only be made at a great expenditure of time and money, and without much hope of success.

My duty and object was not to court failure but to aim at success by the most direct course, I therefore decided to look for a satisfactory solution to the problem of practicability, by beginning the survey at a point east of Lake Nipissing.

The importance of bringing the Pacific Railway as near as practicable