

If the Halifax and Eastern line (route No. 2) be adopted, then the population of Sydney and Pictou, amounting to 53,500, will be excluded.

To the population in the southern or remaining counties (111,200), the Halifax route will be of essential benefit.

From the other route, they would derive no advantage whatever.

It is now proposed to give an account of the explorations and their results.

The dotted lines on the General Plan, No. 1, show where these were made, and the courses taken.

In the season of 1846, the Cumberland Hills were very carefully examined; sections with the theodolite were made, and barometrical observations taken, to ascertain the lowest and most favourable point for crossing them.

The line which had been cut out and explored for the military road was followed from the Bend of Petitecodiac to Boistown.

From Boistown the general course was followed, and levelled as far as the Tobique River, but the country was so unfavourable that new courses had to be constantly sought out.

A new line altogether was tried from the Tobique, as far as the Wagan Portage.

The results deduced from the observations and sections proved this line to be quite impracticable for a railway.

Whilst the line was being tried, other parties explored from Newcastle on the Miramichi River, over to Crystal Brook on the Nipisiguit, the vallies of the Upsalquitch and its tributaries, and as far as the Restigouche River.

The country at the upper waters of the Nipisiguit, and the whole of the Upsalquitch vallies, were found to be rough, broken, and totally impracticable.

The result of this season's labours went to show, that the best, if not the *only* route that would be likely to be practicable, would be by the North-west Miramichi to Bathurst, and then along the Bay Chaleurs.

During the winter, a small reconnoitering party (on snow shoes) was sent up the Metapediac Valley, as far as Metallis Brook, and they made their way across the country from thence to the mouth of the Torcadi River on the Rimouski.

Their report on this line was rather favourable, and had there been any necessity for it, it would have been more fully explored the next season (1847).

As soon as this was sufficiently advanced to admit of the parties entering the woods, the explorations were resumed.

A grade line was carried over the Cumberland Hills. It was cut out through the woods, from the foot on one side to the foot of the slope on the other, a distance of ten miles, and carefully levelled with a theodolite. This proved it to be quite practicable.

The exploration of the Eastern line was again taken up.

It was commenced at the head of the tide, on the south-west Miramichi, and was carried up the Valley of the North-west Miramichi over to and down the Upsalquitch River to Bathurst, and along the shores of the Bay Chaleurs to the Restigouche, up the Metapediac to the Metis, and along the bank of the St. Lawrence to the Rimouski and Trois Pistoles River.

The result of this exploration was so satisfactory, that the party engaged upon it, returned by the same route, surveyed it, and took the levels along it back to the Miramichi River.

An exploratory line was then cut through the greater portion of the flat and generally level country between this river and the province line at Bay Verte.

An examination of the country was made from the Trois Pistoles River along the St.