

shortest way to the coast centres of population and open ocean ports from the greater part of the extensive and valuable region, lying between the Fraser and the Coast range and south of the Nechaco river, is by way of a route in the direction of Bute Inlet. This region is one of very great value. It contains a great extent of farming land, very large natural meadows and a still greater area of grazing land. Its mineral wealth is at present unknown, but the indications are favorable, especially near the Coast Range. It presents no serious difficulties in the way of railway construction. This observation applies to the country as far west as Lake Tatlayacoh, which is 145 miles by the Marcus Smith route by way of Bute Inlet from Frederick Arm. This route reaches tide water at the head of Bute Inlet, and therefore the only gradients to be taken into account are those between the head of that inlet and the Summit. The distance between these points is 94 miles and the elevation to be made is 2,760 feet, or 26.36 feet to the mile, which is certainly nothing at all serious, if it is at all uniform. The maximum grades are 105.60 feet to the mile, or 2 per cent. These occur in three places, one of them is 1.27 miles in length, another 6.67 miles and another 4.43 miles. These, of course, are all against east-bound traffic.

Of the head of the Inlet as a terminal Mr. Smith said: "The extensive flat at the head of Bute Inlet is favorable for the site of a large commercial town. There is fair anchorage and a commodious harbor could be made, if required, but probably a few wharves or slips would be sufficient at present, as eventually the railway might have to be extended down the side of the Inlet to meet the demand of increased commerce." He adds that the Inlet with the channels at its mouth could be used advantageously by car-ferries to convey trains to the shore of Vancouver Island. There is no doubt whatever of the practicability of the Bute Inlet route, and its cost would not be excessive if the construction of the bridges by way of Seymour Narrows were eliminated. If the line were extended to Frederick Arm, ferry connection with the Island would be maintained by way of Nodales Channel. It is interesting to note in this connection that in 1877 Sandford Fleming contemplated the use of Frederick Arm as a terminus for the