

VALLEY RAILWAY BILL PASSED BY LEGISLATURE

But it is not British Columbia only who have in war time. Throughout centuries of British history, John, from sources military, literary, noble and even royal, have occasionally survived momentous events. From the most frivolous and trivial, sometimes the most disadvised, of John's letters, attach themselves here and there, like important hints, to the most serious and careful chronicles. The other historian who writes fully of the disastrous battle of Culloden, which decided the final fall of the royal house of Stuart, when he relates that the advance of General Cope, Wade and Hawley was delayed by the snow-filled glens and icy slopes of wild Scotland, confounders to record in a footnote that the opposing forces drew with a full encouragement from this punning couplet:

Cope could not cope, nor Wade wade through the snow,
Nor Hawley haul his cannons to the foe.

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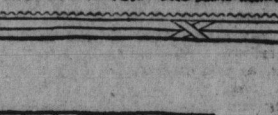
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Keep Them Well

When the bill relating to the St. John and Quebec Railway Company was introduced into the Legislature, it was said that this Valley Railway matter had, as everyone was aware, created considerable discussion throughout the province, but more particularly, perhaps, down in the city of St. John. After listening to very able representation of the matter by the acting premier the other evening, he had come to the conclusion that the only proper solution of the difficulty now surrounding the construction of the road was by adopting that proposed by this bill. It would be remembered that two sessions ago considerable discussion took place in the House on the same question, since which time no progress whatever had been made with the section of the road below Gagetown. The acting premier and himself went to Ottawa, interviewed the Dominion authorities there, were promised that the cost of a bridge across the river up to three millions would be found. Conditions, however, since that time had changed very materially. Not only was a big war in progress, which had caused revision of a great many plans, but it had also been found from reports of competent engineers that no satisfactory foundations could be found for a bridge in any part of the river, in particular in the district where one was needed. The only feasible route, therefore, to go to St. John, appeared to be to go via Westfield. Possibly if the matter could stand over to the end of the war, when financial and other conditions would ease up, no doubt most of them would be better pleased, but circumstances were such that the road must be completed at the earliest possible moment in order that interest on guaranteed bonds and other expenditure could be earned. The solution of the trouble as outlined in the bill was one that should be satisfactory because it was provided that the road should be taken over by the Intercolonial Railway on a 99 year lease, which would relieve the province of any responsibility in the matter. If the road were taken across the river and into the city of St. John by the east side route it would be years and years before it would earn anything sufficient to pay the interest on expenditure. The opposition certainly could not accuse the government of building the railway in advance of the times. The National Transcontinental had handsome stations with all modern conveniences attached, but many of them were boarded up and the only creatures that ever saw them would be a solitary moose or a bear and again that passed by and passed to gaze at the deserted appearance of the place. There was also, he understood, a roundhouse with a capacity of between thirty and forty engines, but which was only occupied very occasionally by one engine. In view of that condition of affairs on that line, which was constructed by the party supported by the opposition, could not say anything in the shape of criticism of the government for constructing this road. He was supporting the bill as the best possible means out of a difficult railway proposition.

Mr. Slipp. Mr. Slipp said he had a very distinct recollection of early history of this railway. The St. John Board of Trade, as well as a section of the St. John press, both of which are now giving expression to much criticism in the matter of the route of the road, did nothing to encourage the construction in the early stages of its history, but after the project was assured and construction under way they woke up. Anyone who had read the speech delivered by the Hon. Acting Premier, a few evenings ago, must be convinced that to continue the project of entering St. John by the east side route would, in view of conditions for crossing, be extremely foolish and detrimental to the best interests of the province. Liability on account of it was big already, but there was no sense whatever in adding to it merely to oblige a section of the people of St. John, chiefly those interested in land around Courtenay Bay. There was one feature of the project which he particularly desired to urge on the attention of the government. In his previous section I should be amended. In the report made by Mr. D. P. Maxwell upon his survey of the proposed route in the year 1910, it is already shown that the

route via Westfield to Westford was shorter than any other west side route and would be much less expensive per mile to build. The report further shows that the portion of the route from Gagetown to St. John between Westford and Westfield was 34 miles only as against 36 from Westfield and Westfield route. He would like to point that out to the committee because even though the difference in distance was small it was, after all, the shorter route and would save \$40,000 or \$50,000 per mile in construction. Those figures he based on Mr. Maxwell's report. This was a matter the government should take note of. There was another argument which could not be gainsaid by anyone who knows anything about it. Referring to the route between Gagetown and Westford, via Westfield, and that between Gagetown and Westfield via Westfield, the former was better than the other from a traffic standpoint. There were a much greater number of people and who were now handicapped between Westfield and Westford than between Westfield and Westfield. Much more crops were grown between the river and Westfield than along the river from Westfield to Westfield, while more up to date methods were also in vogue. The government would not only save on construction but great possibilities there for development of freight traffic were worthy of most careful consideration.

This route was, he felt, so favorable to railway construction that it should be prominently mentioned in this bill. There were advantages of this route which he felt were entitled to due consideration and one of these was the fact that there were no heavy bridges whereas there were 3 or 4 at Devil's Back Creek, Jones' Creek and mouth of Nepesic which would be necessary on river route.

Mr. Grannan Favors Bill. Mr. Grannan said that two years ago he had offered some opposition to bill respecting the St. John Valley Railway which was to give an additional bond guarantee of \$10,000 per mile and he felt at that time that the road should cross the St. John river and enter the City of St. John from the east side. Since then transportation conditions so far as the City of St. John and this whole enterprise were concerned had, as everybody must recognize, been materially changed and he was not so sure that the route had been converted, not by the attorney general or by any of his colleagues but by conditions and interests of the Port of St. John as he saw them. There was some opposition to the paper proposition, to adoption of the west side route, but politics were mixed up in it. Some honorable member—Surely not.

Mr. Grannan, continuing, said that there were also some land speculators who were agitating an opposition to a change from the east side route which they had expected would be fully adopted. There might also be some genuine opposition from persons who really felt that the best interests of St. John would not be served by the adoption of the west side route. One gentleman, however, who had been one of the most ardent supporters of the eastern route, had waited upon him a month or so ago—he was sorry that he could not mention the name of this gentleman—who had said to him that he hoped that the country would not be put to the great expense of building two bridges which would be necessary if the east side route was adopted. This gentleman had pointed out that by constructing the line on the western side of the river it would be possible to get trains carrying transcontinental traffic into St. John much earlier than by the other route and that every good purpose that would be served by the east side route would be served equally as well by that on the western side of the river. He wished to go on record as being in favor of the present bill and after the splendid explanation of the situation which had been given by honorable acting premier in the House a few days ago when introducing the bill he felt that the only objection that could be made to the measure and to adoption of the west side route must be from a political standpoint.

The committee took recess at 6:10 p. m. until 8:30 p. m.

Mr. Woods. On resuming Mr. Woods said he had a few remarks to make regarding what might be called the original route of the proposed railway, but he was saved the necessity of saying much that he might otherwise have said by the very admirable speech of the acting premier on the matter. He might, however, say that he had intended to say that by choosing the original route the government was getting back to the plan outlined in the original legislation of 1910 when no idea was ever suggested of crossing to the east side of the river. It would not be necessary for him to make any reference to the matter at all, but for the fact that section 1 of the bill proposed an amendment to the original route, and he regretted that while the government was getting back to the original idea they did not wholly adopt the wording of the 1910 bill. It was to be regretted that by naming Westfield in the bill now before the House it gave the idea that that route only must be followed. He had consulted with the people of Westfield and district, and he would be glad to see them get the needed railway facilities, but he felt very strongly that the road should go along the route where there was most traffic to be picked up. By keeping close to Westfield route it might result in people of the back country not getting a square deal. Those people in back settlements were worthy of every consideration. It was a great agricultural district, and at the time when the government was spending a hundred thousand dollars a year and over for agricultural development, one should be taken into

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these settlements got due consideration. That district had double the population of any other parish on the St. John river, and were engaged in purely agricultural work and though they suffered from lack of transportation facilities they were a happy and prosperous community. If the road was to run straight down the river people would continue to use boats just as they do at present, or if they did not they would use the train and thus take traffic which would otherwise go by boat. If these boats were asked for a subsidy now of \$5,000, and could not make their operations pay without it, what would the condition be when they had to compete with trains. Boats would have to continue to run for the benefit of the east side people who had no other method of transportation.

In the Parish of Gagetown there were 613 people; in the Parish of Westfield 385, of whom two-thirds of that number lived in back settlements. In the Parish of Westfield there were 613 people and in the Parish of Westfield 385. Whatever route the railway took would not affect the people of Gagetown very much, because they got their railway anyway, but other people would be affected. By following the river to Westfield it would be necessary to construct a bridge over the mouth of the Nepesic, nearly three-quarters of a mile long. Nearly this people of Woodman's Point and nearby didn't want the railway there, because it would spoil the beauty of their summer resort. When people of the Nepesic district ask for anything to be done for them they do not come with a request in one hand and a club in the other, as was the custom of some other people and some board of trade he could name, and because they did not make threats if they did not get what they asked for, that was Mr. Jones.

Mr. Jones said that it had not been his intention to speak on this bill until he had heard speeches of honorable members for Queens. They had pointed out everything all right from the Queens County standpoint, but they had not told the whole story. They wanted to run the railway down the St. John river through their own country to Westfield and then go right across country to Westford. The district which would thus be served was a good highland district and worthy of every consideration, but nevertheless they should not forget the other side of the St. John river. It was true that districts along the river had advantages of steamboat service for seven months of the year, but in late fall when markets were most favorable people along the river had no shipping facilities which made it possible for them to take advantage of markets. The result was that they had to ship their products in early fall and accept prices which were then offered, and were not as favorable as at other times. The people of Kara, on the eastern side of the river, could enjoy benefits of the railway if it was

built down the river route. If the route down the bank of the river as specified in the first bill was followed all the people on the eastern side would have to do would be to cross the river and the railway would be within half a mile of them. Members for Queens had also forgotten the Parish of Kingston on the eastern side of the river opposite Greenwich. People there, like those at Kara, were hemmed in with waterways on three sides of them and were entitled to some consideration, while what was known as Land End was really only 4 miles distant from the City of St. John, yet people there now had to travel 40 miles at certain seasons by way of Westford in order to get into St. John.

One of honorable members for Queens (Mr. Woods), in the great mass of figures which he had presented to the committee to show it possible that the road would never be built north of Centreville. The whole history of the Valley Railway had found Mr. Carvell constantly receding. First of all he said it would never be built at all, then when he found it was built he said it would never be built north of Woodstock. He had to recede from that and then he declared it would never be built north of Centreville. Whether he (Carvell) would do now as in these his unregretted days he did not know, but when he makes declaration as to the road going beyond Centreville it might then be possible to tell whether it is another change of heart or only a new coat of whitewash.

Mr. Carvell. Mr. Carvell said that he recalled that each individual representative should have pride in the district which he represented and in its crop productions and other traffic making qualities. He fully appreciated the difficulties of persons living in back settlements to whom the honorable member for Queens had referred, and he felt that everything should be done as this government had been trying to do for the people who lived in back districts. This government had not overlooked Westford route, but on other hand, survey parties which were now out were surveying both back and front routes with the idea of finding most accessible and best fitted route for adoption. While local traffic was an important factor, yet honorable members must remember that grades were a big feature. Notwithstanding what the opposition press had to say regarding his remarks on the occasion when he introduced this bill, when he stated that he defined the laws of gravitation and made the statement that grades were of no importance whatever on lines of railway, they misrepresented the arguments he was using. He was referring to the matter of grades from the shipper's standpoint and that of the port through which transatlantic shipments were. He had pointed out that export rates through the Atlantic ports of Portland, Boston, New York

and Baltimore were the same as those of St. John, notwithstanding the fact that many railways with different grades covering different distances reached those several ports. What he had stated was that for the port of St. John the matter of distances and grades covering different distances (Continued on page 9)

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