

*C.N.R. Branch Lines*

up to Mile 135.7 and had been completed continuously to Mile 109, with certain patches incomplete from there to Mile 135.7.

By 1921 the bridges and track had been completed to Mile 74.0, at the foot of the Cowichan lake, and subsequently nothing further has been done on this line.

The character of the country for the first 16 or 17 miles out of Victoria is partly agricultural and partly timber area of a light and scattered character of fir timber, of which a good deal has already been logged off. From Mile 20.0 to Mile 50.0 is fully timbered country, but the timber is not as thick nor as heavy as further ahead on the line. From Mile 50.0 through to the Alberni canal the line runs through an exceptionally heavy stand of timber on which, up to the present, there has been practically no development, except along the Cowichan lake where considerable logging operations have been and are going on during the working seasons. The only business of any consequence that can be expected from this line for a great many years to come will be timber and its products until the timber has been cleared and the stumps taken up to permit of agricultural development.

The justification for construction of this line is to handle the timber and its products. As the haul from Cowichan lake on the line to Victoria is 74 miles over a line of 1.5 per cent grades and 12 degrees curves, rates that would pay the railway would be excessive. To shorten this distance an alternative has been looked for and found by the proposed construction of what is known as the Cowichan bay cut-off, which would be a branch 10 miles in length from a point on the line about 12½ miles south of the foot of Cowichan lake—

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: That is the last one you dealt with.

Mr. GRAHAM: This line in connection with the other will complete the line to tidewater—

—Mile 62.0 to tidewater at Cowichan bay, thus reducing the haul from the foot of Cowichan lake to tidewater from 74.5 miles to 22.5 miles. This cut-off being constructed will warrant the extension of the main line to Mile 100.0 which would tap an area of exceedingly fine timber and bring it within reasonable rail haul to tidewater and should produce a big traffic.

SIR HENRY DRAYTON: Will the hon. gentleman show us the situation on the map?

Mr. GRAHAM: The maps are gone.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: No, I have the map here.

Mr. GRAHAM: I will try to get a better map. These are not very good.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: This is not a map at all. There is a red line which shows you think of doing something.

Mr. GRAHAM: It shows where the roads are going to run.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: It is simply an advertising map without scale or anything. If the hon. minister thinks he can build railways on that kind of a map, it is [Mr. Graham.]

a queer proposition. I asked for information in connection with the other line. I suppose we can hope to get that information. I want similar information to that which I got about the former line.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think the hon. gentleman behind my hon. friend gave the information in detail beyond anything I could secure for him.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Perhaps the hon. gentleman behind me knows a little more about the country than the engineers reporting, judging from the character of the reports we have, as he has gone into it more carefully, but we have a right to get it from the engineers, and I am going to ask my hon. friend to bring down particulars in connection with this matter as well as the other matter. The particulars will show what is being done, and we will have information, I presume, in connection with the logging area that is now being cleared. There will be no difficulty in getting pretty accurate information assuming these reports are correct, because, following the hon. minister as best I could, it seemed to me that what he read indicates that the whole of this destroyed area was once a forest, that you have a certain amount of it now cleared, and that you have the clearing back to such a point that it is no longer profitable to haul from where the timber now stands to the end. Is that right?

Mr. GRAHAM: I would imagine so.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Is your information different from that?

Mr. GRAHAM: No.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: I can assume that is correct. If that is correct we will know what timber was hauled by that line from that area which is now exhausted, and we ought to be put in a position to know whether the National Railway system would be justified in making this investment or not, and of course my hon. friend will not forget the map.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in. Mr. Graham thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 35 respecting the construction of a Canadian National Railway line to Mile 100 on Vancouver island.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie King, the House adjourned at 10.45 p.m.