

siderable portion of the line was entered into, and held the contractor's deposit, which accompanied the tender. Subsequent to the change of government in 1911 the incoming Minister of Railways, Hon. Frank Cochrane, after keeping the contractors and the people of Guysboro in suspense for about a year, finally cancelled the contract for construction and returned the contractor's deposit. At about the same time the minister entered into a contract for the construction of seventy miles of railway in the county of Halifax, from Dartmouth to Stewart, the county of Halifax being then represented by the Premier, the Right Hon. Sir Robert Borden. This road was designed to give railway advantages to the fertile valley of Musquodoboit, but the road built stopped short of reaching a most important section of the valley and really ended nowhere.

Later the Guysboro railway project had the attention of the Board of Directors of the Canadian National Railway when, during 1919-1920, the president instructed the chief engineer to investigate the matter thoroughly and report. In pursuance of these instructions the engineer personally spent some time in the district and travelled with the writer over the whole course of the projected route. Some possible changes in alignment were then suggested and these later were thoroughly gone over by survey parties when the further data secured resulted in the adoption of some changes in location. After a full and exhaustive report had been put before the board as to the cost of the road, the gradients and the economies to be expected from its construction, the board, on the advice of the chairman, resolved to proceed with the construction of the road, and recommended that a contract be given for the building of the first section of twenty-five miles eastward from Sunnybrae, and that the work be immediately proceeded with.

The decision of the board was vetoed on the ground of financial stringency by the then treasury board of the cabinet. From these facts it is established that the Guysboro railway was not condemned by every government, but on the other hand had the support and direct approval of the Laurier government, and later also of the C.N.R. President and Board of Directors after the engineers of the board had given the matter the fullest consideration.

As to the matter of the necessity for and policy governing the construction of branch lines connecting with the C.N.R. in the West, a good deal of sound argument can be submitted. While all the branch lines projected, most of which were undertaken by the Canadian Northern management, but not completed, are not of equal importance to the successful operation of the C.N.R., some of them are doubtless necessary as feeders and the delay in their completion has adversely affected earning power of the C.N.R. Most of the settlers in the country which they should serve settled there on the clearly-stated undertaking by the Canadian Northern management that the branches would be at once begun and pushed to completion, which promise was not effectively carried out.

But it is not the western branch lines which particularly interest me, but the Sunnybrae railway, and the general treatment of the province of Nova Scotia as regards railway construction, and the unfair treatment accorded this province in view of its contribution to the general railway expenditure of Canada, and our proportion of the enormous commitments due to the taking over of the Canadian Northern, Grand Trunk Pacific and Grand Trunk Railways, none of the mileage of which lie within or are of any direct material benefit to the province of Nova Scotia.

The importance of the proposed so-called Guysboro railway is due to two facts, in some respects quite distinctly different, while the road from Sunnybrae

to Guysboro will be of distinct advantage to the latter point, and the southeastern coast of Nova Scotia generally, Guysboro county particularly, which has to-day not a single mile of railway. The continuance of the road beyond Guysboro to Mulgrave, thus permitting of the diverting of the traffic now passing over the New Glasgow to Mulgrave line, and the saving to be effected thereby, is the real, important factor, which abundantly warrants the building of the line, as is well known, to all intimately associated with that portion of the C.N.R. between New Glasgow and Mulgrave.

It is a matter of common knowledge that derailments have caused and are still causing grave anxiety to the operating management and the travelling public. Accidents have been numerous owing to the gradient and alignment of the road. The grades in places amount to nearly two per cent, and are such that drivers must rush down a hill to acquire momentum to carry them over the next crest. The bottom of most of the grades are reverse curves, with their tendency toward derailment. Train wreckage with destruction of rolling stock and damage to goods has for years been heavy on the section.

For years there has been an average monthly deficit of over \$50,000 on operating due to adverse physical conditions, as exemplified by the fact that a locomotive which will haul four thousand tons on the prairie sections of the C.N.R. will with difficulty handle less than one-quarter of that tonnage between Mulgrave and New Glasgow. For quite ten years a continuous and effective effort has been made by the engineering department of the eastern division to obtain a better alignment of this important eighty-mile section. Numerous engineering parties examined the whole extent of the road and, after the best trial line diversions were worked out, these departing from the present alignment at some fourteen different points, and giving an increase in the length of the road of sixteen miles, the proposed diversion still offered at best a gradient of 1.68 per cent.

In view of this result the expenditure of any considerable sum in changing the existing alignment was unanimously considered unwarranted, and it was proven beyond dispute that the only real cure for the difficulty, so far as heavy freight was concerned, was to abandon the New Glasgow-Mulgrave section for all through traffic, and extend the New Glasgow-Sunnybrae line through Guysboro to Mulgrave, where a first-class alignment could be obtained with grades not exceeding .06 going easterly and .05 coming westerly from Cape Breton—the alignment and grades on the proposed line being equal to those of the best divisions of the C.N.R. system. The length of the extension Sunnybrae to Guysboro and on to Mulgrave road would be ninety-three miles.

The engineers' estimate of the total cost at present prices, inclusive of right of way, land damages, railway stations, water tanks, sidings, telegraph and telephone system, and all other accessories whatsoever for \$3,556,000, or \$82,000 per mile.

The engineer data, including profile, position of bridges, sidings, water tanks, and every construction detail of that character, is complete and on file in the railway offices, Moncton. The yardage of all cuttings, fills, cost of bridges, etc., has been calculated, and the plans and data are so complete that contracts for the construction of any section of the whole line could be given by the railway management at any time such was ordered.

As to the necessity for improvement in the existing through traffic facilities, passing over the New Glasgow-Mulgrave section of the railway, it may be pointed out that the great traffic producer for the C.N.R. system in the Maritime provinces is the coal, iron and steel trade of Cape Breton and Pictou county, while all the