

On the 18th September Mr. Dickinson started to explore the country between the Assiniboine and the 49th parallel, in accordance with instructions, of which a copy is herewith transmitted. I beg to refer you to Mr. Dickinson's report for an account of the results of his exploration. The examination of the country east of Red River was undertaken with a view to place you in possession of a summer reconnaissance of that important district, Mr. Dawson's explanation having been made during the winter months when the swamps and bogs were frozen.

The map which accompanies this report is based upon Thompson's map, with such alterations as the time at our disposal enables us to make. It is only intended to illustrate, for the present, the general features of the country, as well as to show our several tracks and the area traversed. The dotted red line indicates the general direction of the tracks followed, but the traverses made from time to time are not represented, these with the soundings (upwards of 350 by the lead) are necessarily reserved for the general report, and its accompanying maps and charts.

Mr. Hine occupied the period of his stay on Red River in executing a large number of photographs of scenery, churches, buildings, Indians, &c. which will form an interesting and valuable collection.

I am glad to be able to state that during this last exploration, as in the summer expedition to the south branch of the Saskatchewan, no accident or untoward event of any description has occurred to interfere with our progress or lessen its results.

In inspecting the accompanying map I beg to refer you to the one which accompanies the report dated September 10th, from which the connection between the two explorations will be apparent.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) HENRY Y. HIND,  
In charge of the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan  
Exploring Expedition.

The Hon. the Provincial Secretary,  
&c. &c. &c.

Dear Sir,

Red River Settlement, Sept. 16, 1858.

One of the alleged drawbacks to the settlement of the valley of Red River and the Assiniboine is the scarcity of timber fit for building purposes. You will remember that during our journey up the Assiniboine in June last we frequently saw an extensive forest stretching for many miles in a southerly direction on the right or south bank of the river. It is very desirable that the nature and extent of the forest should be determined, and the character of the timber composing it ascertained. As soon, therefore, as you can complete your preparations I would wish you to determine the limits or boundaries of the forest referred to, and by making frequent traverses or intersections ascertain the general character of its timber.

As far as it is consistent with the safety of your party you will also examine the country between the Assiniboine River and the 49th parallel west of Red River; and, if time permits, the country east of Red River, and between German Creek and the 49th parallel.

James A. Dickinson, Esq.,  
&c. &c.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) H. Y. HIND.

Dear Sir,

Red River Settlement, November 2, 1858.

In accordance with your letter of instruction, dated September 16; I proceeded with my party on the 18th to examine those various portions of the country therein specified.

As the country east of Red River, extending to the Lake of the Woods is quite unknown, except for a few miles back from the river, to any but to those Indians who have there their hunting grounds. I was anxious to procure one of them as a guide. Having succeeded in doing so, after some little delay, I was obliged to examine this part of the country first, as the Indian guide was about to leave the settlement in a few days, for his winter-quarters, and if I had not secured his services immediately, would have failed in doing so afterwards.

Considering that one of the objects of this exploration should be that of seeing where a summer road could be most easily made from Red River to the Lake of the Woods; that being now a subject of great interest among the settlers, who were about sending a party out for that special purpose. I thought it advisable first to go along the straight picket line made by Mr. Dawson last winter—in which direction I understood, he reports that a road can be made for some miles—in order that I might be able to institute a comparison between this and any other portion of the adjacent country through which the Indian might guide me.

The first day I was able only to go about fourteen miles, two-thirds of this distance at least being through marsh and wet prairie. My general course was along the picket line, from which I was obliged to diverge frequently, sometimes a mile or more, but always keeping it in view, in order to avoid when possible, the wide and many marshes through which it passes. The next day, I continued in the same direction, and having reached a point opposite the twenty-second mile post on the picket line, I could go no further, being stopped by a swamp or quagmire, impassable for horses or even men, extending in front for many miles, and on both sides as far as the eye could reach. Though taking advantage of all the dry places within reach, ten miles of the course I took lay through marsh and wet land, and five miles at least through swamp. There are a few small clumps of young aspens along the line, and low willows in some of the marshes, but far away towards the north may be seen some clumps of larger trees.

The land is for the most part a rich loam with a sub-soil of sandy clay, but the difficulty, or rather the impossibility of draining the numerous swamps and marshes, and the want of timber, render this tract of country unfit for settlement; and for the same reasons, the difficulty of constructing a suitable road through it would be very considerable and the expenses enormous.

Judging then that I had seen enough of this part of the country for my purposes, I retraced my steps to the settlement, from which I set out again, under the guidance of the Indian, who promised to con-