

From that time forward, for the remainder of the season, and during the winter of 1858-59, our explorations were confined chiefly, I may say exclusively, to the country between Rainy Lake and Lake Superior. Two well appointed parties were kept constantly at work, and sometimes three. Instrumental surveys were carried from Lake Superior, westward, through Dog Lake, Dog River, Lac des Mille Lacs and the Seine, to within a short distance of Rainy Lake. The levels were taken from Jourdain's Rapid to Dog Lake, and from that Lake across, by the line laid out as a road, to Lake Superior.

In the spring of 1859, having learned that a party fitted out by the people of Red River, who at that time took a great deal of interest in promoting the development of the country, had been baffled in an attempt to take horses through to the Lake of the Woods, had in fact got bewildered in swamps, from which they had experienced much difficulty in extricating themselves, and as the impression as to that section of the country being impracticable for roads was thus gaining confirmation, I hastened to the Lake of the Woods, with the most active of my assistants, and proceeding to its western extremity had the good fortune to secure the services of an Indian Chief, who undertook to show us ground on which the country could be crossed.

Leaving my assistants to find their way across with the Chief, I proceeded by way of the Winnipeg to the Red River Settlement, where I had not long to wait for their arrival. They reported that the Chief had led them to a gravelly ridge which extended, with but few breaks, for a long distance across the most swampy parts of the country, and that the remains of Indian encampments showed that it had been much used as a pathway, in times long past.

A number of men were immediately engaged in the Settlement and sent to open the line which had been traced, in such a way as to render it passable for horses; and over this line *our party rode clear through to the Lake of the Woods, on horseback.*

The line thus opened was used afterwards as a Post road for the conveyance of Mails on *horseback*, and it requires but slight knowledge of engineering to understand that ground, over which horses can be ridden, is not so swampy as to be impracticable for roads.

Returning again to Rainy Lake, we made a more thorough examination of the Lakes, by the old canoe route, than we had previously had an opportunity of doing, and the result led me to the conclusion that, considering the long reaches of navigable water on that route, it could be rendered available, in the first instance, to greater advantage and at less outlay than the line by the Seine, which had been examined and reported on the previous year.

Arriving at Lake Superior, I was joined by my assistant, Mr.

Wells, who
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