

Telegraph Construction—Contract No. 1.

580. Was that on account of any inefficiency between Fort Pelly and Winnipeg?—It was said to be on account of the line through the muskegs between Fort Pelly and Winnipeg.

This attributed to muskegs, in which it is difficult to fix a pole firmly.

581. How would the muskegs make a difficulty?—It is difficult to get a pole down firmly in muskeg.

582. Why is it difficult?—On account of the soft nature of the soil, and the quantity of water in it.

583. Have you ever been over that line yourself?—No.

584. What is the general opinion in the community about the efficiency of that portion of the line? Have you any means of knowing?—The opinion is that the line is very inefficient. I have been told by one of the foremen who built a portion of the line just beyond the narrows of Lake Manitoba, that very often their poles would go twenty to twenty-five feet in the muskeg without touching bottom, and that there was no means of their bracing the poles so as to make them stand.

General opinion that line is very inefficient.

Ties—Contract No. 59.

585. Have you any knowledge of any other contract made on account of the Pacific Railway?—Yes; Messrs. Whitehead, Ryan and myself entered into a contract this spring to deliver 100,000 ties on the line of railway.

Whitehead, Ryan & Ruttan, contractors for 100,000 ties.

586. On what part of it?—On contract fourteen.

On Con. 14.

587. Do you know the number in the Department, of your contract?—Contract number fifty-nine.

588. What was the subject of your contract?—The delivery of 100,000 ties on the line of railway on contract fourteen.

589. What part of the country did that cover?—The country immediately east of Red River.

Delivery to be over country immediately east of Red River.

590. Were you to deliver them at any particular spot on the line?—No; merely on the line of railway where they were got out of the woods.

To be delivered along line of railway where got from woods.

591. At what rate were you to be paid?—At 27½c.

At 27½ cts.

592. Subject to any conditions as to price?—Subject to the Government stumpage.

Subject to Government stumpage.

593. Of how much?—I do not know the amount.

594. Has this contract been fulfilled?—Yes; we completed the contract early in April.

Contract completed in April, 1880.

595. Then the matter has been closed between you and the Department?—The matter has not been closed.

The matter not closed.

596. Why not?—On the 7th of April, after we had completed the contract, Mr. Rowan wrote us stating that he had forwarded the inspector's report to Ottawa and that the 100,000 ties had been delivered. Sometime afterwards he informed us that he had received instructions from Ottawa to have the ties reculled and re-estimated. He had this done with the result of throwing out 4,000 of the ties which he had originally estimated and which he said in his letter to us were delivered.

Ties were reculled and 4,000 thrown out.