

question. That route would surely make St. John the winter port of Canada. It was the shortest possible route between St. John and Montreal. But the great difficulty was that 145 miles of this distance was through Maine—which to many was an insurmountable barrier in the way of its construction. In a vague indefinite way it was known that the route passed to the south of Moosehead lake and if built would connect with a railway that had been built through the Eastern Townships of Quebec and known as the International railway.

The completion of the Canadian Pacific from Montreal to the Pacific renewed public interest in the Megantic route, more so because the men who were at the head of this great enterprise held the control of all the railroad mileage in the Western New Brunswick with the exception of the Shore line. St. John was fully alive to the importance of securing the Atlantic terminus of the Canadian Pacific and hope that we would yet become the Winter port of Canada was renewed. In 1883 several proposals to construct lines through Maine were considered but it was not until March 1884 that anything was really done. There had been a strong feeling for years immediately following the contract for the Canadian Pacific that the line should be extended eastward from Montreal and early in 1884 the Maritime Province representatives in Parliament got together and discussed the question. These were two leading propositions—a line to the north of Moosehead lake, which would enter New Brunswick a short distance from Woodstock and another to the south which would connect with the Maine Central at Mattawamkeag. This last mentioned route was the one endorsed by the St. John Board of Trade and finally adopted by Parliament.