

2. The Northern line starting from the said point near St. John by the most practicable route to the head waters of the Pelly River to serve the district on the watershed of the Mackenzie basin.

It is difficult to estimate distances, even approximately by scaling from the map when the line of the route has not been laid down from surveys or explorations—but as it will have to pass through the Rocky Mountains by the Liard and thence follow other river valleys leading to the Pelly River, the line will be much longer than commonly estimated. Still the distance to the head of the Pelly River as compared with a parallel point on the other route (which would be near the middle of Teslin Lake) would be fully 100 miles shorter than the latter. It is, however, evident:

1. That the districts on both these watersheds cannot be properly or economically served by one line from St. John westward. The line by the Pine River crosses the southern part of the American gold district and is much wanted.

2. That a wagon road or cart trail to the head of the Nelson River would afford great facilities at small cost for prospecting the northern district in the Mackenzie basin, and if gold were found in profitable quantities a railway could be constructed to any point required and the route to Pelly River decided.

3. All the information acquired this far by the inquiry of the Committee appears to me of great value both to arrive at present needs and preparing for future developments.

Yours most respectfully,

MARCUS SMITH.