

Having on my way up from Port Langley arranged with a merchant who had a general store at Port Douglas to take charge of a canoe of his loaded with goods and liquors, I hastily collected a crew and late in the afternoon we started up the Harrison River. At the rapids we all had to get into the icy water and pull the canoe up the rapids, and at dark reached a large Indian house in which dwell many Indian families, with whom we stayed over night, and thawed our clothes and half frozen bodies.

A few more days of misery, after being buffeted by strong head winds accompanied with heavy snowstorms, when travelling Harrison Lake, saw us in Port Douglas, which was a small village composed of rough shacks and a few better balloon buildings for stores and liquor saloons. The place was crammed with miners and packers and others. I hired an Indian to pack my blankets across the twenty-nine mile portage to Lillooet Lake, and next morning started along a narrow trail through the deep snow that penetrated a dense green fir forest.

After many days spent in walking through the snow, and experiencing endless difficulties and hardships, and without a blanket to sleep in, for I had thrown away my blankets the day before I left Port Douglas, as packing them through the snow delayed me very much, I managed to penetrate the country as far as Pavilion Mountain, some distance above the present town of Lillooet, and having tried mining near "The Fountain," which was not a success, and there not being any provisions obtainable, I was starved out and retraced my way back to Fort Langley.

This exploration convinced me this route was not favorable for the construction of the eastern section of my proposed transcontinental railway. I, however, ascertained that there were no great difficulties to be overcome in the construction of wagon roads across the portage between Port Douglas and the present town of Lillooet and thence up the valley of the Fraser River to the Pavilion Mountain.

On my return to Fort Langley, Captain Tom Wright and myself started in a canoe to explore up the Pitt River and lake to see if we could find a better way into the interior than that by the Harrison River and lake. A short exploration in this direction convinced us of the impracticability of this route.

After making this exploration I returned to Victoria and gave the Governor an account of my explorations, and he decided to improve the Harrison rapids in the way I suggested, and also to construct wagon roads across the portage, &c., I had examined between Port Douglas and Pavilion Mountain.

I now made an exploration through the canyons of the Fraser River between Yale and Lytton, which presented great natural difficulties, but in both direction and grades a good line could be obtained for either a wagon road or railway, though the work of construction in either case would be very costly.

When I returned again to Victoria I met Colonel Richard Clement Moody at the Governor's office, and arranged with him to take charge of the first works required to be done in founding the City of Queenborough — now New Westminster — and at once returned to the Fraser River with Colonel Moody and went to work with a number of men to clear the timber off the townsite, erect some necessary public buildings, &c., and on completing the works entrusted to me I left the service of the Government in which Colonel Moody wished me to remain, and then in company with Mr. Robert Burnaby, who had been private secretary to Colonel Moody, we proceeded to Burrard Inlet with a few men to try and find coal at Coal Harbor—hence its name.

We explored the country all around Burrard Inlet, and then along the easterly shore of Howe Sound and up the valleys of the Squamish and Cheakamis Rivers, and ascertained that a favorable line for a wagon road or railway could be obtained as far as we went, but as it was not in the direction for the western section of the transcontinental railway I wanted to get a line for, I did not explore up the Cheakamis River beyond the 50th parallel of latitude.

At the latter part of the year 1859 I returned to Victoria and met Captain Palliser, the late Sir James Hector and the other members of the Imperial expedition before referred to. I obtained a great deal of valuable information from both Captain Palliser and Dr. Hector, but was inexpressibly disappointed, as Captain Palliser reported that it was

#### NOT POSSIBLE TO GET A PRACTICAL LINE.

for a railway through the mountains of British Columbia. I had now for a number of years carried on explorations through the most difficult portions of the Dominion west of Lake Simcoe to traverse at the time I made them as there were no roads, and with the exception of the trail across the Harrison-Lillooet portages, no trails. All these explorations, which cost a great deal of money, I had made entirely at my own expense and consequently I now found myself "dead broke."

The rough experiences I had up to this time gone through when exploring in British Columbia's "Sea of Mountains," led me to think that it was possible that Captain Palliser might be mistaken in reporting so unfavorably regarding a feasible line for a railway, and therefore I applied to Governor Douglas to let me have money enough to defray the expenses I would have to incur to thoroughly explore the country west of the valley of the Fraser River to the Rocky Mountains, and bounded by the 49th and 52nd parallels of north latitude.

Captain Palliser's unfavorable report caused Governor Douglas to refuse my request, and I was then unable to go on with my explorations, but I was determined to resume them as soon as I had an opportunity to do so, for I may say that to find a line for my proposed railway had now become the ambition of my life, for I had now got a tolerably good idea of the im-