

A. Yes, I have seen them myself. I am glad you mentioned that question, because there are two or three things that will now come out of it. I myself took all my materials and provisions for five months and my whole stock of carts, and Mr. King, the astronomer, took his, from Winnipeg by boat to Fort Ellice by the Assiniboine, in the spring of 1879, and we beat, by a number of days, the whole crowd that went by land. We landed our stuff at Fort Ellice, and that same year, or perhaps the year afterwards, in 1880, people went by boat all the way to Fort Pelly, on the Assiniboine. But as the railways came in, there was no more steamboating of that kind. I remember, in the spring of 1880, when we came up in the same way to the site of the future town of Brandon, I asked a gentleman to locate some lands for himself and also for me. I suspected that Brandon was going to be located where it is now, and I wanted to be in the beginning on the ground floor, but he could not see it, and so I did not get any.

Q. What length is the Saskatchewan river without any rapids?

A. I do not know of a rapid on the Saskatchewan from above Cedar lake. There is no rapid, as far as I know, to far above Edmonton, and perhaps above the Rocky Mountain House.

Q. Then, there would be a distance by the river of 1,700 or 1,800 miles?

A. Very likely; I would not be able to say. But, you see, the railroads are stopping all that. I saw the steamboats come down loaded to Prince Albert from Edmonton, in 1896, when I was there. Now, you see, that is all done away with. But this is the point I would like to speak about—

*By Mr. Lewis:*

Q. Where did they go from Edmonton, you say you saw them coming down?

A. They did not run above Edmonton.

Q. How far down did they go?

A. They went down as far as the head of the rapids. The Hudson Bay Company had a sort of little tramway at the rapids. They used to send their stuff up to the rapids, and the boat would take it to Edmonton.

Q. From Edmonton to Cedar lake?

A. That is the way the boat used to run.

*By Mr. Thompson:*

Q. The whole distance by the river?

A. They would go by the river all the way.

Q. From Cedar lake to Edmonton?

A. From Cedar lake to Edmonton.

Q. How many miles would that be?

A. It is fully a thousand miles by the bends and turns.

Q. What would be the size of the boats that would ply on that river, I mean steamboats?

A. These boats are stern wheelers.

*By Mr. Burrows:*

Q. Some of them are 300 tons?

A. Yes. The fact of it is, gentlemen, that the building of railways is obscuring our vision, you may depend upon that, in connection with these matters. That is the reason I wanted to say to you, if you would excuse me, that there are no roads now in the Northwest. There used to be roads, but there are now none. There is not a leading highway at all. The only one that is partly kept up is on the old line towards Humboldt, running to the Saskatchewan. Every town has a few roads leading out from it, but when you go out on one of them and follow it up, you go plump against a fence. The old trails, which you could follow with advantage, are wiped out. Thirty or forty times last year, when out in that country, we would follow up a road and come to a man's fence. We did not ask any question, because we saw no person there