

the east side of one of these channels, where it enters this lake, twenty miles in a straight line from the outlet of Lake Winnipeg. The Mission Village of Rossville stands on the east side of Little Playgreen Lake, which has a length of five miles, and contracts to form the eastern channel or continuation of East River, which is followed a further distance of twenty miles in taking the Hudson's Bay Company's boat route to York Factory, or to a point forty-five miles from the outlet of Lake Winnipeg, in a north-north-easterly direction. This channel is full of islands, and has a width varying from half a mile to two miles, except where it subsides to form a larger class of islands. The country on either side is level, with a surface of light coloured clay, underlaid by gneiss rock, which is often exposed along the sides of the rivers and in the Islands, which are usually capped with clay.

The Sea River Falls, the first interruption of smooth water in this channel, occur at thirty-seven miles in a straight line from the outlet of Lake Winnipeg. These "falls" are merely a small chute, with a descent of about four feet in each of the sub-divisions of the channel at this place. Loaded boats run down the chute, and empty ones are hauled up the current. At the extremity of an eastward bend of the river, eight miles below Sea River Falls, or forty-five miles from Lake Winnipeg, the boat route leaves the Nelson River water and turns up a small, crooked, dead water stream called the Echimamish (or little water-shed or each-way river). Following this four miles in a straight line, Hairy Lake, two miles long, is reached, and at twenty-eight miles from Nelson River we come to an abrupt termination of the western division of the Echimamish at the Height of Land Portage. This is over a nearly level rock surface, measuring only twenty-eight yards in width. The boats are easily hauled across this slight interruption and launched into another stream, but bearing the same name, which here begins at a slightly lower level as abruptly as the western part terminates. At seven and a-half miles eastward of this little water-shed this stream, which is small, sluggish and clear, unites with a larger muddy one, called the White-water River, which is the outlet of a considerable sheet of water, lying a short distance to the south, called Little Lake Winnipeg. Sixteen miles further, after passing through Robinson's Lake, we arrive at the Robinson Portage, the most formidable one on the whole route to York Factory. Here the boats are hauled a distance of 1,315 yards, over a wide and well made road with a stiff clay surface. The descent in the river amounts to about forty-five feet. From this portage all the way to York Factory the boats only require to be hauled out of the water twice, and for merely a few yards each time.

I have described the boat route as far as the Robinson Portage, in order to explain how it may be possible to extend navigation from Lake Winnipeg to this point. Steamers could now descend the river without any improvement being made in it as far as the Sea River Falls. From the head of this slight interruption they might be enabled to reach the Robinson Portage by one or the other of two routes, thus giving forty-nine miles of additional navigation, making eighty-six in all from the outlet of Lake Winnipeg.

The western extremity of Little Lake Winnipeg comes close to a bay in the East River, about two miles above Sea River Falls, and only a narrow bog is said to separate them. The river may here possibly even contribute to this lake, as the muddy waters of the latter resemble those of the Nelson River very closely. In any case they might apparently be made to communicate at this place. Little Lake Winnipeg is only a few feet higher than the stretch of water already described between the junction of its outlet (the White-water River) with the Echimamish and the Robinson Portage. The level of this stretch of water could apparently be easily raised to that of Little Lake Winnipeg by a dam at the Robinson Portage, and another across the Echimamish above the junction of the White-water, at both of which places the banks are sufficiently high for a dam, and they are not widely separated. Should these improvements be found feasible, large vessels would be enabled to reach the head of the Robinson Portage from Lake Winnipeg.

Another plan which might be found practicable would be to throw such an obstruction across the eastern channel of the Nelson River, below the Echimamish, as