

Routes to the Yukon.

the mountains at the head of Halfway River, unless it were on instructions from Ottawa to attempt to make an exploration of a direct line from Fort St. John to Telegraph Creek. The principal reason of the failure of the party to get through was their taking this course, which on account of the much deeper snowfall occurring west than east of the mountains and on account of the more heavily timbered nature of the country rendered travelling in winter impossible, whereas travelling on the route sketched east of the mountains to the Liard River would have been entirely practicable as was proven by the trip of a party led by one Jack Graham who left St. John for the Liard River by way of the Nelson last summer, and after reaching the Liard returned to St. John in the month of June, using pack horses both ways, and bringing all his horses but one through in good condition. Graham was travelling from the Liard to Fort St. John at the same time that Moody's party were travelling from St. John to Fort Graham, showing that if the Fort Graham route was impracticable, that by the Nelson and Liard was not. The failure of Moody's party only occurred when they left the suggested pack trail route beyond Peace River, and crossed to the west of the mountains in the apparent effort to reach Telegraph Creek instead of keeping east of the mountains with a view of reaching Pelly River by way of the Liard. Had they followed the course originally suggested, there is no reason to believe that they would have failed to make the trip.

Q. Have you seen the diary of Mr. Moody's party published.—A. Yes, that was on the way to Fort St. John.

Q. No, but I mean to Fort Graham.—A. No I have not. He published a diary from Edmonton to Fort St. John. That appears in the police report, but there is nothing from St. John to Fort Graham.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE EVIDENCE OF MARCUS SMITH.

538 BANK STREET,
OTTAWA, 6th May, 1898.

Col. BOULTON,
Chairman of Committee *re* Edmonton and Yukon
Route for Railway or Wagon Road.

SIR,—The last question I was asked by the Committee was: What is the distance from the nearest point on the projected line of railway by the Pine River Pass to Fort St. John on Peace River?

Ans.—Under fifty miles (probably forty miles).

This brought out a point of vantage for the line to Pelly River which I had not fully considered.

1. Assuming that the Trans-Canadian Railway Company could make such arrangements with the Government that the construction of that division of their line from Prince Albert westwards should be commenced as soon as possible and in two years afterwards completed as far as that point convenient for a branch to St. John. That would be a trunk line common for two routes. One crossing the Rocky Mountains by the Pine River Pass, thence westward to join the proposed Government line from a point on the Pacific coast (probably by the Nass River up to near its source), thence on to Telegraph Creek and Teslin Lake, to serve the mines on the watershed to the Pacific. The line up to a point opposite Fort St. John would traverse a rich, agricultural district and bring the products of the territories of Saskatchewan and Alberta (centring in Prince Albert and Edmonton) several hundred miles nearer the Yukon gold fields than they are now.