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23/7/27

from Colonel William Wood

59 Grande Allée

Quebec

Canada.

To the Curator
of the McCord Museum
Montreal:

Dear Madam:

Would you kindly place this letter on file for reference as a memorandum for the next meeting (which, I understand, is not till October).

In confirmation of my conversation with you and Dr. Lighthall some time ago, I propose that the Committee might consider the advisability of making a collection of everything which illustrates what - for want of a better title - I might call the Water Life of Canada, from the earliest times down to the present day. There is, apparently, no such collection anywhere else; and the subject is of immense significance, because Canada grew far more by way of the water than the land.

Up to the World War the calculation was that 100 tons could be taken by water as well as, or generally better than, 10 by rail or 1 by road - especially as distances increased. What then, must have been the advantage of water transportation over land transportation in the days when there were no rails and the roads were few and bad?

The suggested collection should consist of:-

- 1) Documents
- 2) Books
- 3) Maps
- 4) Models
- 5) Other cognate objects.

I well remember the difficulty I experienced in 1913, when trying to get original evidence for my All Afloat: a chronicle of Craft and Waterways (vol.31 of the "Chronicles of Canada"). Books, maps, models, and other material, all were scarce, and very piecemeal too.

1) Documents giving the original evidence exist in scattered places. We might a) get what we can, b) photostat what we can't obtain, and c) index everything important