

Sound Cities to Alaska. The saving of time in respect to northern British Columbia and Yukon points would be relatively greater. Hence the Island occupies a strategic position of great importance in connection with north and southbound traffic. It will be shown later that at least two routes for a line running longitudinally through the Island are available.

The strategical position of Vancouver Island in respect to the traffic of Alaska is further strengthened by the proximity of the southernmost point of the Island to the harbors on the United States shore of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. From the outer harbor of Victoria to Port Angeles on the opposite shore of the Strait the distance in nautical miles is 17; from Beecher Bay to Port Crescent it is 10 miles, and to Port Angeles 16. These distances are by no means too great to be covered by car-ferries, as will appear later, nor is the character of the sea encountered a serious drawback if properly constructed ferries are used. The route from Beecher Bay to Port Angeles would lie diagonally across the Strait, and I assume would therefore be less affected by the roll which sometimes comes in from the ocean, than either of the others, which would cross the roll at right angles to the direction of the waves. In neither case, however, would the sea be sufficient to interfere with the better class of car-ferries. Railway construction to Port Angeles will doubtless come about at a very early day and in that event a connection could easily be established between the lines on the Mainland of the State of Washington and a line or lines on Vancouver Island, and thus the northern terminus of railway travel from the Pacific coast states to and from Alaska would be transferred to the north end of Vancouver Island. The feasibility of such a project has received the endorsement of distinguished authorities on transportation. These considerations seem to establish the value of Vancouver Island strategically in connection with traffic to and from the north.

The next aspect of this side of the case is the relation of the ports of Vancouver Island to trans-Pacific commerce. Before giving estimates of distance, it may be mentioned that the ports of Vancouver Island possess an advantage over all other ports on the northwest coast by reason of their nearness