

The Canadian Engineer

An Engineering Weekly

THE GEORGIAN BAY—OTTAWA—MONTREAL WATERWAY

By J. A. MACDONALD

The Georgian Bay-Montreal Canal project is one of the most important the Federal Government of Canada has to face. At the time the surveys for it were being carried on it was a subject of considerable discussion, but of late on account of its political aspect parliamentarians and politicians have been more interested in it than engineers. Each year, the expansion of trade and increased railway traffic between east and west makes the canal more important. Mr. Macdonald, of the Topographical Surveys Department, Ottawa,

Canada has the control of the bulk of the export and import trade of the great North-West of the continent if she should want it, as a glance at the accompanying map will show.

Trade will always take the shortest and cheapest route. This being the case, it is clear that if Canada has such a route its proper use will ensure her the trade, and this we find in the proposed Georgian Bay-Ottawa-Montreal waterway, usually known as the Georgian Bay Canal.

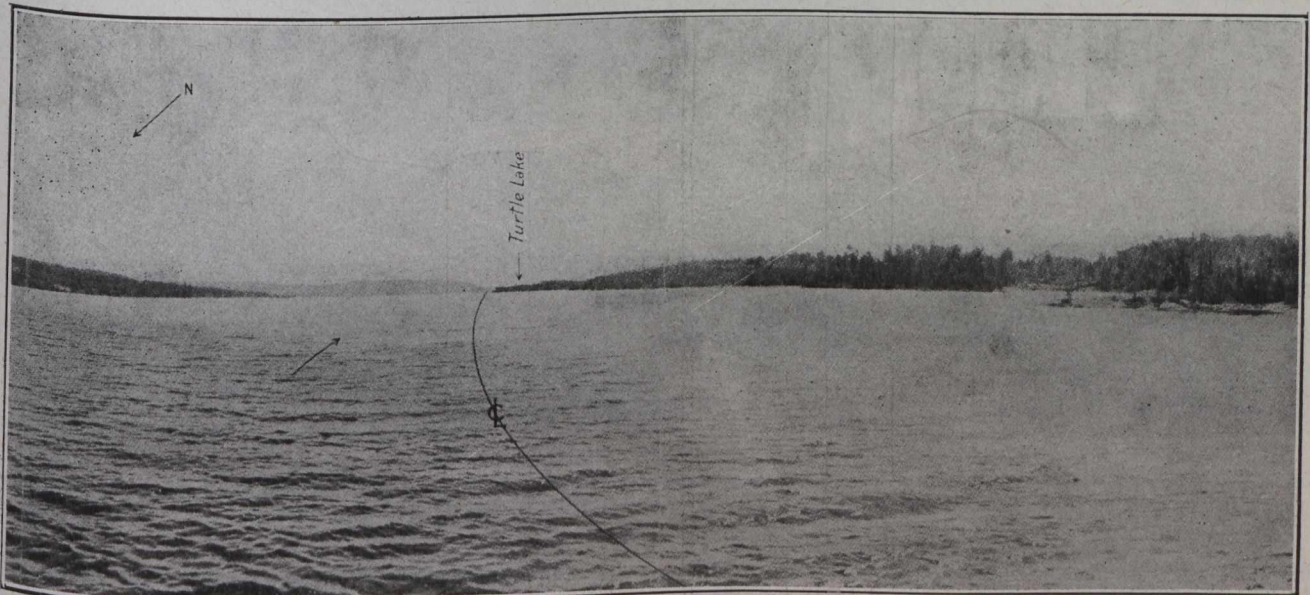


Fig. 1.—Summit at West End of Trout Lake.

briefly reviews the proposed course of canal and the difficulties encountered, gives figures and data, and discusses the question in a way which we believe will prove interesting even to those who, previously acquainted with the subject, have perhaps of late years grown hazy, and who will no doubt be glad to refresh their memory and consider things from the viewpoint of the author.—[Editor.]

It is the opinion of prominent Canadian shipping interests that Canada has little to fear from the improving of the Erie Canal route, or, indeed, any transportation route that the United States can construct, if she takes but full advantage of the great Montreal resources which Nature and Providence has given her.

The survey, which was completed two years ago, required nearly three years' hard work by a competent staff of engineers. It has been completed in such a detail as not only to determine the most economical and feasible route, but to afford ample data for a close estimate of cost.

Commencing at Georgian Bay, the line proceeds up the French River by one of its five estuaries, known as the French River Channel, to the village of that name, where the first lock is encountered. By this lock the line is taken into the Pickrel River, which is followed for 37 miles to the second lock, then a lift of 24 feet brings the canal again into the French River. This stream is utilized for a distance of 14 miles to the third lock. Another lift of 24 feet at this