

*Halifax, 5th November, 1851.*

SIR—

Having carefully submitted the Rawdon ridge to the rigid test of the spirit level, I have the honor to report for your information the result of my trial surveys, to ascertain the proper point of junction in the valley of the Shubenacadie River, for the lines of Railways to connect the Eastern and Western Counties with the Capital of this Province. Supposing the Eastern line or main trunk to be located as shewn on the plan made by Major Robinson, it was necessary to determine the position of the western line, or the west route through the County of Hants towards Windsor. To decide the proper or most suitable line, I instructed my assistant, Mr. Wm. McKay, to commence a trial survey at McPhee's bridge on the Nine Mile River. The height at this point above the level of medium high tides, Halifax Harbor, having been taken in 1835 by George Baldwin, Esquire, by order of my father, and to run a line of levels on the road leading northward to the road called the Indian road, near Robert Roulston's, from thence eastward to the summit height in Temple's valley, and westward to W. Withrow's mills. The result of these surveys and levels proved the summit heights in Temple's valley to be 310 feet—in Scott's valley 387 feet, and at a point on the road east of Wm. Withrow's mills 546 feet above tide level. The distance by Temple's valley is about two miles longer than by Scott's, and there are some curves in this route which may be overcome by a detailed survey. I am of opinion that the western line should join the main trunk line below Hall's bridge, at a height of 60 feet above tide, and run in nearly a strait line through Scott's or Temple's valley, thence on the north side of the Rawdon hills to, at or near the low ground near Thos. Tanner's house, from thence to the River Hebert, near Stephens', and from thence keep the valley of the Hebert River on the north or south side of the river, as may hereafter be considered best, to at or near the outlet of the Meander River—from thence it can go via the route laid down by Mr. George Wightman, in his printed plan, or it may keep near the line of the new road into Windsor. I object to the line shewn on Mr. Wightman's plan, from the foot of the Grand Lake, on the south side of the Nine Mile River, via Withrow's mills, for these reasons: 1st—It passes over the highest land in the County over which a Railroad may be made. 2d.—It is too near the Whinstone rocks. 3d.—It is in every respect inferior to any of the other routes in every point in which it can be viewed. The routes proposed by me are coloured red on the plan. The survey and levels taken by me began at W. Withrow's mills, and terminated at the tide level in the Kennetcook River, near the west line of land of Benjamin Smith, Esquire. My levels checked, and proved to be correct those taken by Mr. McKay, and shew the height of the land on part of the north side of the Rawdon hills. From the sections it may be seen that the grades on the route proposed by me may be less than 40 feet to a mile. The land on this line is all granted—is well settled, and is of the best quality—scarcely an acre being unfit for cultivation.

The plan annexed to this Report is not very correct, as it is a compilation from various plans—many new roads are not laid down, and the courses of the Rivers are very imperfect. It is, however, as good a plan as can be made, without a survey, from the materials I have at my disposal. The sections and profiles of the roads and streams are correct and valuable. A moderate expenditure would have made a fair survey of the Townships of Windsor, Newport, Rawdon, and Douglas, from which information of the most useful kind might be obtained. An examination by a Geologist of the Coal formation on the north side of the Rawdon ridge, the Salt Springs, Slate Quarries, and Freestone Rocks, might be expedient. Facts enough have been gathered to demonstrate that a Railway may be constructed from the main trunk line westward