

"In 1857 this opening (speaking of the opening in Weller's Bay) is represented to be 100 rods wide, with a channel 150 feet wide and 14 feet in depth; and in 1861 the channel appears to have been 200 feet in width and a depth of fully 14 feet.

"It will thus be seen that from the time when the opening was first made the channel has continued to increase in width."

Mr. Rubidge says:

"It is not improbable that this bar may continue increasing to such an extent as to cause the beaches to unite opposite the cove, in which case Weller's Bay will once more become a lagoon."

Here they are complaining of the shifting sand and the shifting of that entrance to such an extent as to make it unreliable, when the chief engineer tells us the depth is 14 feet and the channel has increased in width.

Mr. BOWELL. Is not that being accomplished now by the action of the water? Is not the entrance to Weller's Bay being narrowed down by the action of the waves and the shifting sands?

Mr. PLATT. I have heard no report to that effect.

Mr. COCHRANE. Why did you want the lighthouses changed?

Mr. PLATT. I will deal with that presently. With regard to the shifting sands, here is what the chief engineer says:

"From what could be ascertained as to the original line of the beach and ridge, it appears that the action of the lake has been such as to carry the sand, of which it is composed, from its original position, and deposit it in such a manner as to increase the width of the bank without materially encroaching upon the area of the bay.

"The fact that the sand has not, so far, been deposited to any extent in the bay, is evident from the material in the bottom consisting of clay, with no stratum of sand over it."

These are Mr. Rubidge's remarks regarding the action of the water:

"By this it will be seen that the action of the lake has been such as to carry the material of which the beach was composed and deposit a great part thereof in deep water inside the bar (where was formerly good anchorage), thereby greatly increasing its width and encroaching upon the bay."

The sand does not encroach upon the bay. Every practical man who has taken soundings has failed to find a stratum of sand there. Thus we see the chief engineer, Mr. Page, contradicts Mr. Rubidge in this important respect. I am told that the channel is not narrowing, that there is a space a quarter of a mile in width of a channel there now, with 16 feet of water. That does not look like narrowing, to any great extent. So far as the change in the direction of the channel is concerned, those lights were never built in range with the deepest channel. The contention was, that the lights had better be built as they now stand and the channel changed by dredging. To say that that channel is not, at present, all that is desirable, is no argument, because it could be easily made so by very little dredging or by changing the lights. An expenditure very much less than the cost of dredging Presqu'Isle would keep Weller's Bay channel permanently open and in range with the lights. I hope the hon. the Minister of Customs, who knows so much about these range lights, will take a note of this, and see that not a summer passes until those lights are made what they should be. I have been simply attempting to show that the Government, in the selection of the route, have chosen a longer route, a route in which we find great difficulty, on account of difficult entrance, and in which the cost of construction is going to be a very great deal more than it would have been by the other route. We know, according to the engineer's reports, that the other is a shorter route, and has a harbor equally good, and more easy of access than Presqu'Isle harbor. The mariners of the lakes have decided, almost unanimously, that Weller's Bay harbor is the best, and that Presqu'Isle harbor would seldom be used by them. The difference between the reports of these engineers, which I have been showing the House, is more marked when we come to the report Mr. Page has made on Mr. Rubidge's report. It appears that the Government decided upon the route of the Murray Canal on

Mr. Rubidge's report, without considering Mr. Page's report. Mr. Rubidge's report did not pass under the eye of Mr. Page until the Government had passed an Order in Council in favor of the Presqu'Isle route. Then, before the contract was let, Mr. Page examined the report of Mr. Rubidge, and sent in the following memo. to the Government:

OTTAWA, 6th July, 1884.

"The lowest tender is that marked L, and the highest is marked C; as, in most cases, the lowest is, I believe, considerably below the fair value of the work, and the highest is probably quite as much above it. In short, it is thought that rates such as would form a mean between the lowest and highest would enable a contractor to execute the work satisfactorily and leave a fair margin for profit. But although there is every reason to believe that the lowest tender is below the value of the work, it is nevertheless 75 per cent. higher than the estimate submitted by Mr. T. S. Rubidge and recited in the Order of the Honorable the Privy Council, dated 23rd May last.

Tender L amounts to	\$1,140,625
To which must be added the following items:—	
Superstructures of road and railway bridges.....	35,000
Land damages.....	10,000
Superintendence and contingencies.....	75,000
	<u>\$1,260,625</u>

Mr. T. S. Rubidge's estimate is..... \$721,000

"It has been considered proper to draw attention to this matter in the manner above stated, for the reason that one of the main features of the case (the cost) has been erroneously represented, a result which alone has a tendency to give the impression that other questions of importance may have been inadvertently overlooked."

Here is a commentary on Mr. Rubidge's report which the Government might have taken into consideration; and had they considered it, they might have chosen a different route from the one they selected. Mr. Page proceeds to point out that Mr. Rubidge's estimate is \$721,000, instead of \$1,260,000. Being called upon to explain how it was the tenders so much exceeded his estimate, he explains by saying he did not allow for "rip-rap" and "quarry waste," etc. Mr. Rubidge's report, from end to end, seems to be one elaborate argument in favor of the Presqu'Isle route, as though he had started out with the determination of securing the selection of that route. Mr. Page, I believe, holds that opinion, too. I understand that Mr. Page never sanctioned the report of Mr. Rubidge, and that he told practical men he never would sanction it; that Presqu'Isle Bay was not so easy of access, that it would be more expensive, and the difficulty of entrance would prevent vessels from using it. Much has been said about the shifting sands in Weller's Bay; but I would ask what about Presqu'Isle harbor? Has that harbor not changed? Is the entrance to it what it was years ago? Mr. Rubidge says not. He says:

"That portion of the beach on the mainland extending westwards from the sand banks, referred to above as having been washed away since 1861, was probably swept by the prevailing current (which has here a general set to the westward) across the entrance of Boat harbor to Shoal Point shoal, as the former is now closed and Shoal Point appears to have made toward the west and north on the shoal.

"The old channel or passage into Presqu'Isle harbor, between the Middle Ground and Shoal Point shoals, is also found to be silting up and narrower than formerly. It now lies north of the line of Salt Point range lights, which at one time led directly through the passage, whilst north and east of Salt Point the channel has increased in depth and width."

Here is a description of a magnificently changeable channel, and this is the channel which is chosen because of its permanency, while the other is rejected because it consists of changeable sands.

Mr. PAINT. I rise to a point of order. I think this speech is too long, and I ask your ruling in reference to this matter.

Mr. PLATT. I am about to close my remarks which should have been made two years ago.

Mr. BOWELL. They were made.

Mr. PLATT. They were never made since the selection was made, and hon. gentlemen have no idea of the feeling