

*Rear-Admiral de Horsey to the Admiralty.*

"SHAH" AT ESQUIMALT,  
9th October, 1877.

SIR,—With reference to the directions of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, contained in your letter No. 86 of the 19th May last (received 14th August), I have the honor to report that I send the "Daring," Commander Hanmer, to make a general examination of the channels and approaches of the River Skeena.

From Commander Hanmer's report, and from such information as I have been able to obtain, I am of opinion that, whether in view of communication with the inhabited parts of British Columbia, or of through traffic across the Pacific, the vicinity of Skeena is totally unfit for the ocean terminus of the proposed Canadian Pacific Railway. The mere circumstance that the bars of the river are not navigable for ocean steamers except at high water, is of itself condemnatory, in my opinion. Added to this, are the difficulties of tortuous approaches on a very foggy and rainy coast, and that the land in the vicinity is reported to consist of mountains and swamps, offering little inducement to settlers.

I beg to transmit herewith a copy of my orders to Commander Hanmer, and of his report, accompanied by plans of the mouth of the Skeena and of Woodcock Landing.

The lateness of the season and the almost constant rain caused a service of this kind (necessarily performed in open boats) to be somewhat arduous. I submit Commander Hanmer's execution of it for their Lordships' approval.

I have forwarded a copy of this report and enclosures for the information of the Governor General of Canada.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) A. De HORSEY,  
*Rear Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.*

*The Earl of Carnarvon to the Earl of Dufferin.*

DOWNING STREET, 3rd January, 1878.

MY LORD,—With reference to my despatch No. 350 of the 17th December, enclosing a despatch from the naval Commander-in-Chief on the Pacific Station, reporting his views with respect to the question of the site for the terminus of the Pacific Railway, I have the honor to transmit to you a copy of a letter received from Mr. Sandford Fleming relating to this subject.

A copy of Mr. Sandford Fleming's letter has been referred to the Board of Admiralty, who have been requested to furnish a reply to the queries which he has put on certain points.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) CARNARVON.

*Mr. Sandford Fleming to Mr. Herbert*

CANADIAN AGENCY, 31 QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, E.C.,  
LONDON, 26th December, 1877.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipts of Admiral De Horsey's despatches of dates 9th and 26th October, on the subject of a site for a terminus on the Pacific Coast for the Canadian Pacific Railway, both despatches having by the direction of the Earl of Carnarvon been recently transmitted to me for perusal.

As requested by you, I now return the plans of the mouth of the River Skeena, which accompanied Admiral de Horsey's despatch of the 9th October.