

My duties having been limited, under arrangement, to the superintending of the construction solely, all the accounts of the road being kept by an officer of the Honorable Hudson's Bay Company, I have communicated your request for details of expenditure, &c., to Mr. J. H. McTavish, in charge at Fort Garry; the wages, contracts, and other accounts having been paid on the written orders of Mr. Lonsdale or myself, as per arrangement, which has been continued by your verbal instruction while here.

On the 27th July last, acting under the instructions of Mr. J. H. McTavish, on behalf of the Government, I proceeded to the eastern termination of Mr. Snow's road, which I found to be one mile west of White Mouth River, where I left Mr. Lonsdale in charge of a gang of men to work eastward, while I proceeded with six men to cut a bridle-path out to the lake, and explore the country to learn the practicability of being able to open a cart-road to the Lake of the Woods within a month, which I found to be impossible with the limited control of labor at that time. The time occupied by me in cutting this bridle-path, a distance of forty-eight (48) miles, till my return to Fort Garry for consultation and further instructions, was twenty-three (23) days.

Meantime the work on the road was proceeding so rapidly and satisfactorily under Mr. Lonsdale, and being in daily expectation of your arrival, Mr. McTavish and myself came to the conclusion that it would be advisable to continue the work until more definite instructions were received.

Upon the arrival of Col. Wolsley in command of the troops, that officer requested my advice as to the practicability of moving troops at that time by the North-West Angle bridle-path, when it was decided to at once widen and otherwise improve the path, which was accordingly done, and in a short time ready for the passage of troops arriving and returning.

The Colonel and his staff also returned by the path. Since that time the work has been pushed on with all possible energy, and by careful explorations selecting the best ground for a good road, more than with a view to keeping straight lines at a sacrifice of time and expense; and I trust that these efforts will meet with your approval and that of the Government.

Occasional deviations were found necessary to be made from your old line, but from White Mouth River to Birch River very little deviation is made; from thence it was deemed advisable to run more to the eastward for the purpose of avoiding the massive chain of rocks, known as the North-West, and Moosehead Rocks, near the Cariboo Muskeg, and by this deviation much time and expense has been saved. The Cariboo Muskeg has entailed one mile of heavy cross-laying and a quarter of a mile at each end, in all one mile and a half.

Indeed, I regret to say that we find, by careful exploration, from Birch River to the North-West Angle, a distance of thirty (30) miles, nearly one-half of which will have to be cross-laid.

I would here mention that my attention was sometime ago drawn to statements in the local press, as emanating from Mr. McNab, the surveyor left by you at North-West Angle to make further explorations. He is said to state having found a creek at the North-West Angle and north of the present road terminus, which would afford a better landing than the one already located, also having discovered a fine ridge running west from the said creek to a point which would intersect the road somewhere near the Cariboo Muskeg; but I regret to say of either the creek (north) or the "fine ridge," notwithstanding the careful exploration by Mr. Lonsdale and myself, no trace could be found, or any indicative mark or blazes, to shew recent exploring by other parties.

Agreeable to your instructions when leaving here, the force of men employed has been increased as largely as practicable for profitable working, as from about twenty-five (25) men then, between eighty and ninety (80 and 90) are now employed, which strength I hope to be able to maintain, at least all the present month. Fortunately so far, the season has proved extremely favorable for working, and the progress of the work under Mr. Lonsdale's charge is highly satisfactory; and I have every confidence in stating that the road will be ready and in a fair condition for cart and wagon traffic from the North-