

It has been objected to the Depôt as a starting point, that it is shelterless and that the ice will tear away any wharves that can be built.

Now, on reference to the map, it will be seen that Thunder Bay is itself a harbour, although of somewhat large dimensions, completely land-locked and sheltered from every wind; any swell, therefore, which can be felt must arise within the bay itself. The huge surges of Lake Superior do not roll into it at all, and it may be regarded, to all practical purposes, in relation to the subject under consideration, as an inland lake. Looking upon it in this light, the starting point at the Depôt is in a bay of moderate depth, completely sheltered from the prevailing winds, which are westerly. A glance at the map will show that it is safe from winds blowing from the west, south-west, north, and north-west, and, I may add, that a wind, blowing from a direction fifteen or twenty points to the east of north, would not affect it. East, or south-easterly winds, alone, would blow in upon the harbor, but the extent of their sweep would be limited to the width of Thunder Bay, and the surge which could arise in that distance may easily be guarded against. That the swell has no great effect in Thunder Bay, at any time, is demonstrated by the fact, that the trees grow clear down almost to the level of the water, indeed, in some places dipping their branches into it. Whereas, in exposed parts of Lake Superior, the wave-lashed shores are destitute of vegetation.

It has been said, moreover, that the ice would carry wharves away, and, as convincing proof of this, a boulder was pointed out to me which had been shoved ashore by the ice. I merely notice this to show the sort of arguments which have been advanced to disparage Thunder Bay and promote the Kaministaquia. If wharves cannot stand in the tranquil waters of a land-locked bay they can stand nowhere, and those who object to them in Thunder Bay, on the score of ice, can have had but little experience of such a river as the St. Lawrence, where wharves are built to resist ice rushing against them in immense fields, with the full force of the spring floods, as is the case at Three Rivers when Lake St. Peter is breaking up.

Among the advantages which the Depôt at Thunder Bay possesses, may be mentioned the facility of approach or departure to sailing vessels, as they would have ample sea-room to beat in or out, which they could not have in a narrow river like the Kaministaquia, with a shoal at its mouth extending a full mile from the coast, and a very important point to be considered is that Thunder Bay, as compared to the Kaministaquia, opens earlier in the spring and remains open later in fall. As an instance of this, it may be remarked that, in the fall of 1866, when the Steamer *Algoma* made her last trip, the Kaministaquia is said to have been frozen over, and that so strongly that the people of Fort William were skating on the ice.

From the Depôt, eastward along the shore of Thunder Bay, the ground for a distance of several miles is practicable for a road, and there are facilities for the construction of wharves, in various places, more especially at a point a little to the eastward of Current River, where there is a small natural harbour, which, by means of piers, might be sufficiently extended.

It was at one time believed that the upper or eastern end of Thunder Bay, affording as it does an excellent natural harbour, would have been a favorable point from which to run a line of road to Dog Lake, but a careful examination shewed such a line to be impracticable, within any reasonable limit of expenditure, on account of the rugged nature of the country over which it would have had to pass. Moreover, to have adopted the head of the bay would have increased the distance to be navigated by some forty miles, that is, including the addition both in Dog Lake and the bay.

Referring, again, to the locality which has been chosen as the starting point at Thunder Bay, it is admirably adapted for the construction of wharves. The water deepens uniformly and gradually from the shore until, at a distance of five hundred feet, it has a depth of three fathoms and a half. Timber suitable for the work is very abundant on the Kaministaquia, whence it could be easily floated down, and on various parts of the shores there is abundance of loose stone for filling the piers, and the fixed rock, close at hand, is of a nature to be easily blasted.

At present, it is proposed merely to sink an isolated pier or breakwater, at which vessels can discharge their loads, doing in fact no more than is necessary to facilitate the landing of material and supplies for the works, leaving it to future consideration whether the wharves shall be extended at the public cost, or left to private enterprise.

I conclude this part of the subject by noticing still another route which has been advocated namely: the