

# GOVERNMENT'S VALLEY RAILWAY BILL SUBJECT OF LEGISLATURE

## Provides For Change in Route and Entry to West St. John

### Acting Premier Admits That Dunham's Wharf Crossing is Feasible, But Says 'Western Route is More Desirable—'condemns Maxwell Report—Gutelius Quoted as the Authority

Fredericton, April 25.—Hon. Mr. Murray introduced the Valley railway legislation tonight in the form of an agreement with the St. John & Quebec Railway and the Dominion government, and a bill to provide for the changing of the route from the east to the west side of the St. John river to join the C. P. R. at near Westfield.

He gave many reasons for not building the bridge across the St. John river and building the railway to Rothesay as promised the people, condemned the Maxwell report and, while admitting that a crossing at Dunham's was feasible, pleaded the additional great cost as an excuse for not constructing it.

The reasons advanced by Gutelius and Monsarrat were dwelt upon at great length. In fact, one would not think that the province of New Brunswick was lagging and paying for the road to listen to the minister's ready compliance with the wishes of the Canadian government railway and its alleged scheme of development for New Brunswick.

Survey parties are now out looking over the route to the C. P. R. either to Westfield or by the middle route to Wolford. It is promised connection will be made by February 1, 1917, and that freight will be passing over the line to St. John via the C. P. R. by that date.

Excuses for the change of route formed the great part of Mr. Murray's speech and while he quoted Gutelius and Monsarrat's report, he did not read a line from the speeches of Fleming, Hazen and Clarke promising construction from Grand Falls to Rothesay.

All They Get. Provision is made in the agreement to extend the line to Andover by December 1, 1918, and in the meantime bridge across the St. John to be built between Andover and Grand Falls and a highway road to tap the Transcontinental at some point in Victoria county. That is all the people above Andover get.

There is an interim agreement for operation with the I. C. R. dating from April 1, 1915, upon terms and conditions to be agreed upon. Hon. Mr. Murray referred to "curious arguments advanced by the St. John board of trade" and argued that modern railway operation did not attach so much importance to railway grades as they do, citing as proof that heavy loads are carried by the old line from Moncton to a point near Berry Mills than over the Transcontinental from Moncton to the same point via the cut recently built.

The problem therefore before the St. John people was not the Valley railway grades but improvement of shipping facilities at the port.

More Surprising Statements. Another statement that surprised his listeners was that the freight rate to Halifax would be the same as to St. John. "It was only one cent more."

The Vancouver branch is not included in the present agreement and has evidently been tabled as dangerous to impose upon New Brunswick.

It was not until recently that Mr. Murray's speech. The railway is to be built to link up with the C. P. R. The province of New Brunswick is to pay the cost of the bridge across the St. John and Kennebecasis is abandoned, as is the plea made to the house by Hon. Mr. Murray himself and his former leaders when they appealed to the people in 1912.

The section in the bill which provides for a settlement with A. R. Gould and his associates, but Mr. Murray did not explain anything about it. He had nothing to say about the Prudential Trust Company and the funds in its hands but the speaker did make the remarkable—the very remarkable statement—that an auditor had been able to lay his finger on one dollar that had not gone into the construction of the road.

Another almost as remarkable statement was that the cost has been kept well within the first estimate. Up to February 1 the cost between Gagetown and Centreville was \$4,469,927.81, or 87¢ per mile. If the cost had been the amount paid out by the Dominion government for subsidies then there was no such large sum as \$4,469,927.81. If not, the road cost \$6,000 more per mile.

Grand Falls Out of It. It was noticeable that no mention whatever was made of making connection with Grand Falls. There was a lot of reading from the Gutelius report on the cost of the Transcontinental line in New Brunswick but elsewhere, only at the cost of the Central railway, but no mention of the loss to produce the books of the St. John & Quebec Railway at the investigation and no reason advanced why the province never sought to recover that alleged \$134,000 shortage on the Central railway construction which Mr. Maury referred to.

Unpleasant—But Worst is to Come. He had a most unpleasant task in explaining the change of route to the members listening but it was not nearly so unpleasant as he will have making a similar appeal to his constituents in Kingston to whom he promised his resignation if the railway was not built across the river to Rothesay.

From the Official Report. Fredericton, April 25.—The house met at 9:15 o'clock. Mr. Dugal gave notice of inquiry as to the amount paid to Irving R. Todd as president of the St. John & Quebec Railway Company for his services as president of the St. John & Quebec Railway Company from James Currie, of Nash's

He would like to explain some of the provisions of the payment, including that relative to the payment of subsidies to be made. As formerly specified, subsidies were payable only when the whole road was completed but under the new arrangement they are to be paid on each section as it is completed. For instance, from Gagetown to Centreville, was completed section, and subsidies upon it could be paid while subsidies on the Gagetown to Westfield section and Centreville to Andover section would be payable as these sections were completed. This would make it easier to finance the work and the contractors would be better able to carry on their work under such an arrangement while the change, he believed, was in the interests of the province and of the road generally and would be commended on all sides.

He would next like to refer to the provisions of section two of the agreement which was as follows: "The Dominion company in order to facilitate the connection of the line of railway from Centreville to Gagetown with the city of St. John shall construct a railway from Centreville to the operation of the line of railway from Gagetown to a point on the Canadian Pacific Railway at or near Westfield on or before the first day of February, A. D. 1917, and shall complete the construction and equipment of the said line of railway in accordance with the specifications hereinafter set out, on or before the first day of August, 1918, and shall complete the construction and equipment of the line from Centreville to Andover up to and according to the said specifications on or before the first day of December, A. D. 1918."

Mr. Monsarrat reports an increase of his original estimate of the cost of the bridge over the St. John river at the cost of material, which makes his estimate of this crossing \$1,200,000, and the time required to build it at least two years.

He names the sum of \$12,000 as the annual cost of maintenance and operation of this bridge and concludes by saying that the Dominion government is recommending the adoption of the Westfield route.

By the Westfield route there would be about 4000 feet less bridge to be built and about \$700,000 less bridge to be built to assume, in capital expenditure, upon which the annual charge is interest alone would be \$85,000. Besides these advantages, annual charge, St. John can be obtained probably twelve months sooner than by the Rothesay or the Westfield route.

The Intercolonial railway assumes all liability for expense of handling traffic from Westfield to St. John, either over the C. P. R. or by an independent line, or by a combination of the two. They will by this arrangement be able to deliver, or receive freight from the docks at the west side of the harbor as well as their own docks at the east side at Courtenay Bay without any additional charge to the shipper.

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control its routing. This is primarily in the hands of the shipper or consignee who naturally desire their freight to move by the route giving the best, fastest and most efficient service, freight rates being equal.

The aim of any Atlantic port should be to handle the greatest freight tonnage for the least money in the shortest time.

The port that can offer these advantages to shippers, shipping companies and railways will get the business, irrespective of grades and curves on railways centering there.

The problem before the city of St. John is, therefore, not grades, curves and obstacles on the Valley Railway, but to increase and modernize their shipping facilities, to endeavor to secure access to and the benefit of these facilities for all railways running in there and to abolish any local charges that add to the expense of handling traffic.

The routing of the Valley Railway down the west side of the St. John river to St. John will help in accomplishing these aims. It will permit the Intercolonial Railway to have access to the docks at West St. John, provide additional berths, accommodate the traffic of the St. John river at St. John and abolish the toll charges (fifty cents) per ton in effect over the present railway bridge.

The ideal development of railway communication between Westfield and Gagetown which would greatly facilitate the movement of traffic for both the C. P. R. and the government railways would be the construction of a second track which would have better grades eastbound to be used for all westbound business, which would be equivalent to a double track for both railways.

The "Vancouver" Branch. In connection with the Canadian government railways scheme of development an important feature is a proposed extension from a point on the Valley railway between Fredericton and Centreville to a point on the Maine border.

This extension has been referred to in correspondence from Mr. Gutelius to the minister of railways at Ottawa and it is believed that this will have an important bearing on the future not only of the Intercolonial Railway but of the Valley railway as well. For the Intercolonial railway it will form a part of their main line connection with the New England states, giving them the means of carrying at favorable freight rates the forest product of central and northern New Brunswick to the markets of the eastern states.

It will increase the traffic over St. John & Quebec railway, particularly that portion running from the city of St. John to a point on the Valley railway between Fredericton and Centreville where a diversion is made and in some measure at least increase the traffic over other portions of the road.

The construction and operation of this proposed extension is not included in the present agreement. That it is not by mutual consent on the part of the two governments.

It is deemed to be most expedient for our efforts at present to be directed to the completion of the railway to the port of St. John providing for the transcontinental traffic bound for that port to be ocean-borne to the markets of the West Indies.

Having this in mind the agreement calls for the section of railway from Gagetown to St. John to be completed by the Dominion government by the first day of January, 1917, and to be finally completed in August, 1917.

In the meantime extension to the West side of the river is deferred until favorable financial conditions, when it will be built under an arrangement to be entered into by the federal and provincial governments. It is not the province's aim to say, that will not be a detriment to the province but will be not only in the interest of the province but at the same time have regard to the interests of the Canadian government railway system with which the prosperity of the people of the country is so intimately connected.

The construction of this piece of road together with increased facilities at the port of St. John, including an entrance to both east and west sides, will be a minimal and improved passenger accommodation will at its consummation, prove the care and prudence with which this scheme has been carried out and will rebound not only to the credit of the governments having the matter in hand but will tend to promote the growth and prosperity of the province and the interests of the province which are so inseparably connected with that port.

This connection is an important one for the Intercolonial railway and for the St. John & Quebec railway.

It will greatly increase business over the portions of the St. John & Quebec railway dependent on the port of St. John, which is short of providing a sufficient tonnage for bond interest.

2. Provide a competitive route for all traffic to and from the United States markets, and consequently lower rates.

An adjustment of rate divisions between the I. C. R. and the Dominion railway is satisfactory to the railways but does not benefit the public as a competitive route will and such an agreement can be called at any time.

3. By having this independent connection with American railways the Intercolonial would be in a position to grant the same or better freight rates to the shippers as the C. P. R. whereas at the present time these shippers pay more than twice as much for their freight as do the shippers on the C. P. R. from adjoining points.

4. By forming a part of the Intercolonial main line the connection with the New England states will facilitate shipment of forest products of central and northern New Brunswick, it being estimated that not less than forty cars of freight per day will be handled over the connecting road at the Maine border.

The second reason for the change of route, Hon. Mr. Murray said, was that the government was not assured of the practicability of the St. John river bridge construction nor the permanency of the structure, if it was built, after completion of the bridge and the opening of the St. John river.

Seventy, the construction of another railway bridge at St. John would help to increase efficiency at that port, and lastly, it was not possible to obtain positive assurances from competent engineers that a bridge across the St. John river could be satisfactorily constructed nor its permanency guaranteed were it built.

The Bill. The government was introducing a bill dealing with the St. John & Quebec Railway Company which would not discuss in detail at that time the details of the proposed crossing of the St. John river at the Dunham's wharf crossing of the St. John river.

Mr. Monsarrat was engaged by the provincial government to make a report on the feasibility and relative merits and costs of alternative crossings over the St. John river on the line of the St. John & Quebec railway at or near Westfield.

He was not asked to recommend one route over another nor to express his opinion as to whether the crossing of the St. John river at that point was practicable or otherwise under the existing circumstances. This, in a measure, was unfortunate, as it has caused a misunderstanding of the report he made in February, 1914. Since that time Mr. Monsarrat has studied the matter and provided for its different routes proposed and has emphatically condemned what is known as the bridge or Rothesay route, claiming that the expense of such a route would be prohibitive.

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The port that can offer these advantages to shippers, shipping companies and railways will get the business, irrespective of grades and curves on railways centering there.

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The "Vancouver" Branch. In connection with the Canadian government railways scheme of development an important feature is a proposed extension from a point on the Valley railway between Fredericton and Centreville to a point on the Maine border.

This extension has been referred to in correspondence from Mr. Gutelius to the minister of railways at Ottawa and it is believed that this will have an important bearing on the future not only of the Intercolonial Railway but of the Valley railway as well. For the Intercolonial railway it will form a part of their main line connection with the New England states, giving them the means of carrying at favorable freight rates the forest product of central and northern New Brunswick to the markets of the eastern states.

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crossing would be justified only if there was no alternative.

Mr. Monsarrat. In recent correspondence he points out that it would take at least two years to construct this crossing.

"2. That a connection with St. John could be obtained a year earlier by the Westfield route than by any other."

"3. It is always desirable from an engineering standpoint, to choose, if possible, a route which does not entail the construction of heavy bridges with difficult foundations, thus avoiding unforeseen contingencies which might arise in construction and maintenance of structure of this nature."

"4. It would have no hesitation in recommending the adoption of the Westfield route."

In other words, Mr. Monsarrat says that it is possible or feasible with suitable alternative was not available, but otherwise it is an impracticable proposition.

Mr. Monsarrat's estimate of the cost of the crossing at Dunham's wharf was \$2,068,750.20. He has since added for the increased cost of material \$100,000, making the total cost \$2,168,750.20. The maintenance alone would cost \$120,000 annually. The interest alone would cost \$106,188 annually—a total of \$1,194,838 annually.

Mr. Monsarrat condemns the Gorham's Bluff or "Mistake" crossing, and insists on bridge spans from shore to shore to provide a suitable obstruction as possible to avoid scour.

Condemns Maxwell's Report. Mr. Maxwell plans to have nearly 4,000 feet of embankment on this crossing and provides for a main span of 400 feet, whereas 900 feet is provided in an important feature, which would be necessary to take the rats now used on the river. Maxwell's estimate of the cost of crossing is \$1,734,608. The borings on the Maxwell crossing at Dunham's wharf are 168 feet, or more, in other places is replaced by soft clay, most unstable material on which to establish a foundation for a heavy bridge and the load it would have to carry, together with the extraordinary wind and wave pressure it would not doubt at times be subjected to.

The soundings on the alternative crossings are equally unsatisfactory. The obstruction to navigation at the crossing proposed by Maxwell would be so serious, it is not unlikely that the Fisheries department of public works would refuse to approve of the location of a bridge at that point.

Channel Spans. Taking up Mr. Maxwell's report he said that this showed that the main channel span was 400 feet and the main span of the crossing was 400 feet wide (fifteen joints averaging 30 feet wide). Mr. Monsarrat's plan allowed a 600 feet opening. The location of the bridge at Dunham's Bluff would in other places is replaced by soft clay, most unstable material on which to establish a foundation for a heavy bridge and the load it would have to carry, together with the extraordinary wind and wave pressure it would not doubt at times be subjected to.

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