

SHEDIAC
PORT EGIN
PUGWASH
RAILWAY PROJECT



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THE
SHEDIAC
PORT ELGIN
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SOME REASONS

*Why a Rail Line from Shediac, N. B., to Port
Elgin, N. B., via Cape Bald, thence
to Pugwash, N. S.,*

Should Be Constructed.

A glance at the map of Westmorland County, N. B., and the adjoining County of Cumberland, N. S., will show that one of the most populous and industrious sections of Eastern Canada,—that lying between Shediac and Port Elgin in Westmorland, a stretch of 28 miles,—has never had adequate transportation service. For forty years or more this district, rich in natural resources on land and sea, with a population of over five thousand, has been endeavoring to be linked up with the Government owned railway at Shediac,—but so far without success. At the present time the people of this splendid section, backed unanimously by the Boards of Trade of Moncton, Shediac, Port Elgin, and elsewhere, and by a strong sentiment on Prince Edward Island, the important trade of which would be vastly benefited by such a railway, are again making a strong appeal for relief from a situation which has become well-nigh intolerable.

WOULD DOUBLE POPULATION

In the district extending from Shediac to Port Elgin, there are presently numerous empty houses and vacant farms, an unfortunate condition which is mainly due to the lack of shipping facilities. There is little doubt that the building of a railroad would not only tend to repopulate these vacant spaces, but would likely have the effect of doubling the population in five or ten years, and result in the develop-

ment of numerous industries, now dormant, encourage new ones and augment greatly the tourist traffic and summer cottage construction along the many miles of beautiful sea beach which lies in the Cape Bald-Little Cape section of the Northumberland Strait coast line.

PORT ELGIN-PUGWASH PROPOSAL

As is hereinafter outlined, the present movement is not confined to the construction of a railway from Shdiac to Port Elgin, but includes also a suggestion that the Canadian National Railways continue such construction for a distance of another twenty-six miles to the town of Pugwash in Cumberland County, N. S., thus serving another district rich in natural resources, and at the same time relieving the main C. N. R. line from Halifax to Moncton by diverting much of the Cape Breton trade to the new route. This route would be considerably shorter than the present long haul via Truro and would eliminate the sharp curves and heavy grades of the existing lines which, under present conditions, will shortly have to be double-tracked.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND WOULD BENEFIT

A glance at the map will evidently show that an extension of the C. N. R. from Shediac to Port Elgin would be of immense benefit to Prince Edward Island, — Port Elgin being less than seventeen miles by the Sackville-Cape Tormentine branch of the C. N. R. from the mainland terminals of the Island car Ferry at the Cape. It is a certainty that owing to the ever increasing volume of traffic between the Island and the mainland, the Sackville-Cape Tormentine branch must, in the very near future, necessarily be double-tracked. The construction of what would be a much shorter line to Shediac would obviate the necessity of double-tracking and at the same time provide a very important section of the country with the transportation facilities to which it undoubtedly has a right.

LONG SUFFERING PEOPLE

The residents of the district between Shediac and Port Elgin, always thrifty, enterprising and energetic, have been patient and long suffering. There is probably no district in the Maritime Provinces, possessing such varied and promising natural resources, that is so severely handicapped as are the greater part of the parish of Botsford and the eastern section of the parish of Shediac which include the

following bright and prosperous communities: — Boudreau Office, Barachois, Robichaud, Dupuis Corner, Cape Bald, Lower Cape Bald, Legere Brook, Botsford Portage, Great Shemogue and Welch P. O. A few miles from the proposed line are Bourgeois Mills, Ohio, Lower Aboujagane, Upper Aboujagane, Glaude Office, Gallant Settlement, Cormier Village, Saint Andre, LeBlanc Office, Chapman, and several other interesting hamlets. There are about eight hundred families in the district. Were all the dwellings in the back villages brought to the main front highway between Shediac and Port Elgin, there would be a house every fifty yards along this road. There would not be room for all the buildings, residences, barns and other structures side by side. The entire section through which a line from Shediac to Port Elgin would pass is very level, and for more than half the distance would require no cuttings. Two bridges only would be necessary. The erection of these bridges would not entail the heavy expenditure which structures of the kind built over swiftly moving streams in other parts of Canada generally call for.

MORE FORTUNATE SECTIONS

The western central section of Shediac Parish has had a railway for about seventy years. Before the advent of that line there were less than a dozen houses in what is to-day the widely known seaside town of Shediac, none at Point du Chene and less than a score in the prosperous and constantly growing Scoudouc district which, thanks to the C. N. R., has increased four fold in the past quarter of a century. The benefits which a C. N. R. branch confers are also shown in the north western section of the parish of Shediac, where the construction of the Buctouche and Moncton line greatly enhanced the value of farm lands and markedly added to the prosperity of the Scotch Settlement, MacDougall's and the Upper Shediac River settlements.

SHORTER LINE TO NOVA SCOTIA

"An extended line from Shediac if built through these thickly settled districts along our fine coast, along to Port Elgin, a distance of twenty-six miles, thence in a straight line to Pugwash Junction, another twenty-six miles, would shorten the mileage for all the traffic along the north shore of Nova Scotia by about fifty miles. This would give Cape Breton and all the eastern end of Nova Scotia, such centres as Pictou, Stellarton, New Glasgow, etc., a cheaper rate for shipping

their coal and other products to Quebec and Ontario. The idea of double-tracking the Sackville-Cape Tormentine section, also the main line from Halifax to Moncton, seems to be attracting due attention. There is a strong possibility that this would not be necessary were the proposed extension along the North Shore to be built. This would mean two through or main lines which would divide the traffic, accommodate more people, give better service generally, and not cost the country one half the expense of double-tracking the present crooked and heavy graded line from Painsec Junction to Halifax and from Sackville to Cape Tormentine."

THE MERCHANT'S VIEW POINT

A merchant expresses his views as follows:—"From Barachois to Great Shembagne there are twenty-one stores. To obtain from each one of the interested parties an idea of the volume of their yearly traffic was evidently quite a problem in itself, but I succeeded in gathering the following information from eight store-keepers and made an average for the others. These eight stores imported in the year 1928 seven hundred and twelve tons of freight and exported forty-four thousand dozens of eggs. Of the thirteen remaining stores, to submit safe figures, I set them down at $1/3$ of the business of the first mentioned stores. This would mean that our store-keepers imported over 1100 tons of freight and exported, with the egg circles included, over 75,000 dozens of eggs in the course of the year under review."

Should you add fencing material, stoves, furnaces, furniture, salt, lime, farming machinery, but still not take into account what the farmers themselves haul from Shediac and Port Elgin, you may then be in a position to form an idea of the volume of freight which a railroad would be called upon to handle.

A CAPE BALD VIEW POINT

The author of this pamphlet recently interviewed a prominent Cape Bald business man in regard to the requirements of the district and the railway question in general as it applied to the eastern sections of Westmorland and Cumberland counties. His views are quoted as follows:—

"Let me impress upon you that our people have been a very quiet, easy-going people; should they have been of a different spirit

they would not have tolerated the conditions they have been subjected to for so many long years. They should have organized before this late date and set forth before the proper authorities what they considered their righteous claims. A strong delegation should have presented the matter to the Duncan Commissioners. We have no doubts whatever as to the fairness of our case in the matter of a railway for this section of the country. We feel assured that the members of the Commission would have readily appreciated the grave difficulties under which our population is laboring and fully endorsed our efforts."

"We have long been paying our share of taxes to build railways for the development of other sections. You may be aware that the C. N. R. line from Sackville to Moncton is far from being a straight line and has heavy grades. The road from Sackville to Cape Tormentine runs through marshes, swamps and boggy land, especially from Upper Sackville to Port Elgin. It is a hard road to maintain. Note to crooked line from Sackville to Amherst and down around Athol, Springhill, to Oxford Junction; then the branch line via Pugwash to Pictou, then to Cape Breton, — a distance of ninety-six miles from Moncton to Pugwash Junction."

THE POTATO INDUSTRY

At the present time the people of Cape Bald and the adjoining villages must haul their produce to Shediac at heavy expense and truck their incoming freight from that town. It is necessary in some cases to haul potatoes a distance of twenty-four miles to the Shediac warehouses, the general cost being estimated at twenty-five cents a barrel. Owing to the difficulties which must necessarily be encountered in the handling of potatoes under present conditions outside buyers do not feel inclined to undertake the work of shipping; consequently, one of the best potato growing centers in the Province is deprived of the benefits which should accrue from such a valuable asset. It costs about three dollars a ton to haul a carload of fertilizer from the Shediac railway yards to Cape Bald by teams or trucks. It is estimated that in past years each farmer in the district has spent from one thousand to two thousand dollars trucking produce and goods between Cape Bald and Shediac and vice versa. It costs about three dollars a ton to truck coal from Shediac to Cape Bald. Formerly a similar situation had long confronted those of the eastern part of Westmorland County, but their difficulties were greatly alleviated by

the building to the Sackville-Cape Tormentine railway. Still the same difficulties exist for those of the lower section of the parish of Botsford who patronize the C. N. R. at Port Elgin. Throughout the section under review there are no large potato warehouses such as exist at Shediac which ships over one hundred thousand barrels yearly. In not a few cases farmers must pile the potatoes in fields, sheds and barns and await a means of transporting them to the Shediac market. Exposure to sun, dampness of frost often damages the tubers with the result that the potatoes have not always been of the best quality when they reached the market. This situation is one of the most serious the farmers have to contend with. It goes without saying that this situation could be very materially helped were the farmers in a position to deliver their products on the spot and in time.

The following information supplied the author of this pamphlet by a leading potato producer and shipper: gives an approximate idea of these extensive operations which obtain in connection with the growing of potatoes:— "Our soil is ideal for growing potatoes. The proof of it is that many farmers have grown as many as 450 bushels per acre, the average being about 300 bushels per acre. At a reasonable price, this means a profitable business. Although the potato industry has its drawbacks owing to its unstable market, there is a certain fascination in it for the farmer. Potato growing appeals to him. Along this coast the farmer adds fishing to his numerous occupations and vice versa. Sea-weed as well as herring are used in great quantities as fertilizers for the land. Thus we are in a position to grow potatoes cheaper than any other potato district. IN 1928 ABOUT TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND BARRELS OF POTATOES WERE GROWN BY OUR FARMERS. WHICH WOULD MEAN ONE THOUSAND CARLOADS. We can also guarantee these potatoes to be as good, if not superior, to any grown in Canada. The main difficulty with us is to transport them to a suitable shipping point. Although there are a few motor trucks in the district they cannot possibly move one quarter of this production as the time for hauling is somewhat limited in the Fall on account of the state of the roads. Potatoes have to be stored during the winter months and put on the market the following Spring, if market there is. IF WE HAD A RAILWAY THE BUYERS WOULD SHIP DIRECT FROM THE POTATO CENTRES. THE FARMER IN DISPOSING OF HIS CROP WOULD SAVE TWENTY-FIVE OR THIRTY CENTS PER BARREL,

NAMELY THE COST OF HAULING THIS CROP TO SHEDIAC. We could easily compete with other sections in the growing of seed potatoes. The distance from suitable shipping renders any attempt along this line entirely futile."

BERRY CULTURE

A strawberry grower from St. Andre in the parish of Shediac expresses himself as follows:—"Ten years ago there were no berries grown in our section. To-day as many as thirty-five tons of small fruits are raised each year. Under present conditions this fruit must be hauled as far as thirty miles to be disposed of by shipment to Sydney, N. S., and Montreal."

"Strawberries are a fruit which should reach the market within forty-eight hours from the time they are picked. They cannot stand any longer in cool weather. On very hot days after thirty hours they deteriorate and sell at half the regular price, resulting in an appreciable loss to the grower. As most of these small fruits are handled on a commission basis, the grower is forcibly the loser. If a rail line was built from Shediac to Port Elgin, then from Port Elgin to Pugwash, the difference in mileage on shipments to Sydney would be seventy-eight miles shorter. Being handy to a railway, we would be in a position to dispose of our berries on the day they are picked; they would be on the market the next morning, twenty-four hours earlier than they actually are by the present system of transportation. The grower would also benefit from a cheaper expressage and receive top prices for his good stock."

"Should inducements be accorded this very important industry along the lines of appropriate shipping facilities, I vouch to state that this section would cultivate at least 250 acres of small fruits at an average of about one and a half tons per acre. What is said of strawberries could be applied to blue berries as well. We have vast areas of blueberry plains; if these fruits could be placed on the market without too much expense I am sure they would bring good returns. There is a big demand for blueberries in the large cities, and prices range from twenty-five to forty cents a quart. There are hundred of thousands of quarts of these fine fruits which are lost each year owing to our poor shipping facilities."

"Gooseberries are now raised in our section. My experience is that this fruit is very well adapted to our soil and can be grown in

large quantities at a very good profit. I am sorry to say that our out-of-date and inadequate system of placing this delicate fruit on the market by the use of trucks or waggons is a great drawback and acts as a damper on any real efforts to work along the lines of advancement in this paying industry."

THE FISHING INDUSTRY

Here is what a leading representative of the Cape Bald fishing industry had to say:—"The important point to decide is whether there is sufficient traffic along this section to warrant the construction of a railway. Let me state that the fishing industry alone should induce such a move on the part of the authorities. The lobster fishing industry opens on August 16th and closes on October 16th in each year. For about fifteen miles along this coast there are three hundred fishermen, or one hundred and fifty boats. The small average of three tons per boat amounts to four hundred and fifty tons of lobster caught along this coast or section during the season. Of these four hundred and fifty tons of lobster caught and transported, at least two hundred tons are shipped alive to the United States. These lobsters must be taken from Great Shemogue to Shediac by motor boats or motor trucks, a distance of twenty miles. For several causes upon the arrival of the lobster in Shediac there are from fifteen to twenty per cent that have died, thus entailing a heavy loss to the fishermen.

"The same thing can be said about the smelt trade. Smelts are caught on five different rivers along the Northumberland Strait coast. As in the case of lobster, there is a haul of at least twenty miles before a shipping point is reached. In mild weather and in snow storms this work is done with great difficulty and at heavy expense. The smelt catch amounted last year to two hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

"Another kind of fish that is handled quite extensively is smoked herring or Canada bloaters. In the year 1928, along a fifteen mile coast there were 40,000 boxes or 480 tons forwarded to market.

"In the year 1927 there were some 1200 barrels of cysters caught along our coast. I have no figures for the year 1928.

"I need not call your attention to the large quantities of other kinds of fish that could be caught and handled if we had better transportation facilities. Let me mention mackerel, cod, bass, salmon, clams and quahaugs. These are very plentiful and in great demand in outside markets."

DAIRYING

The country is well adapted to dairying. Its winding rivers, rich green pastures and extensive commons should encourage our farmers to take more interest in this important and far-reaching industry. The difficulties experienced in reaching a profitable market has stunted all efforts in promoting an interest in this industry. However, with transportation facilities duly provided our farmers, without a doubt, would take an active interest in a safely paying proposition and derive from their well-kept herds the benefits which would accrue. Although handicapped under present conditions reliable information tends to show that over five hundred gallons of cream were shipped to Moncton creameries and about sixteen thousand pounds of butter exported.

COMMERCIAL FERTILIZER

Many farmers living at a considerable distance from the shore cannot very well use herring as a fertilizer. Commercial fertilizers must be imported. According to reliable information obtained from dealers about five thousand two hundred and twenty tons supplied this district in 1928, which would mean so much freightage were the railway constructed. Besides, last year the farmers of this section bought farming implements to the value of twenty-eight thousand dollars, — and this business is repeated every year.

LIVE STOCK

A dealer in live stock states that "without taking into account the large number of animals slaughtered by local butchers reliable information indicates that at least fifteen carloads of live stock were shipped to outside points during the year. Owing to the fact that lambs are disposed of in large numbers to local buyers, no reliable figures could be obtained; but I am sure that not less than six carloads were shipped this Fall from the several districts along the coast. It might be well to call your attention to the fact that much more could be done in the matter of shipping hay, straw and grain were better facilities offered the farmer."

POULTRY

"We disposed of seventy-two thousand pounds of poultry for the Christmas trade through the poultry exchange. Four or five years ago very little interest was taken in the raising of poultry as it was a diffi-

cult matter to reach the right market. I confidently assert that a very promising future awaits this industry should the proposed line be constructed."

LUMBER

At least 2,500,000 ft. of lumber and over 2,000,000 laths were exported during the year by the various mills in the sections which would be served by the railway. This lumber had to be hauled at least nine miles to the nearest shipping point. Over seventy-five carloads of stove wood remain in the mill yards without a market. Vast quantities of available pulp wood remain untouched owing to the fact that insufficient means of transportation obtain. The same might be said in regard to a wealth of old growth hard wood.

INDUSTRIAL POSSIBILITIES

Besides the important fishing, lumber and agricultural industries in western Shediac Parish and in the Cape Bald-Shemogue zone of the parish of Botsford, there are numerous stone quarries and clay beds all along the shore which would be developed. Reporting in 1927 on a sample of Great Shemogue red shale, Mr. J. F. McMahan, ceranic engineer of the Department of Mines Branch, Ottawa, said:—"This material burned hard to a light red brick. This material could be recommended for the manufacture of hollow building ware and drain tile."

CHRISTMAS TREES

A dealer reports:—"We also could ship Christmas trees. I have written different parties about Christmas trees. One of their first enquiries is the distance to the nearest shipping point. I came to the conclusion that a railway is urgently needed if any impetus is to be given this industry."

COAL DEPOSITS

Coal exists at Dupuis Corner and in other localities. Local parties have dug considerable quantities of this coal. The coal is classified as being of a good quality.

BOAT BUILDING

A boat builder remarked:—"We have what used to be Moncton's main industry years ago. We have boat builders who are turning

out fishing and pleasure boats that cannot be excelled anywhere. With proper transportation facilities this industry could be developed in such a way as to give employment to many more people."

TOURIST TRAFFIC

There are many miles of beautiful sea-beach which affords splendid bathing in safe and smooth waters between Cape Bald and Shemogue. There is a limited number of summer cottages. Americans very often request accommodation for the summer season or part of it. There is no doubt but that the construction of a railway would greatly increase the tourist traffic and thereby aid the line. There is an excellent wharf and breakwater at Cape Bald for both commercial, fishing and pleasure craft.

THE CASE IN A NUT SHELL

Here are some of the main reasons for an extension of the C. N. R. from Shediac to Port Elgin, thence to Pugwash, N. S.

- (1) It would fulfil a long promised necessity to about eight hundred families along this proposed road to Port Elgin, besides giving Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton and the Nova Scotia mainland better service.
- (2) It would be an easy road to build, the country being very level, with only two bridges to construct and an easily maintained road after its construction.
- (3) It would obviate the necessity of a double track from Sackville to Cape Tormentine, and even from Painsec to Halifax.
- (4) It would help to reoccupy and reestablish many vacant houses and farms along the proposed route.
- (5) It would do away with driving the mails with teams and autos, a system which gives very poor service in winter.
- (6) Equipment would be a small item, as the trains that operate from Painsec Junction to Shediac could run this extra mileage at very little added cost.
- (7) It would accommodate more people in proportion to the number of miles than any other line built in New Brunswick and of the same length.

- (8) Should this line be constructed from Shediac to Pugwash, three trains could haul more freight than five on the main line where sharp curves and heavy grades exist from Moncton to Truro. This proposed line to Pugwash would be practically straight. The distance by the proposed route would be:— Pugwash to Port Elgin, twenty-six miles; Port Elgin to Shediac, twenty-six miles; Shediac to Moncton, the present C. N. R. line, sixteen miles, a total of about sixty-eight miles.

HIGHLY ENDORSED

The time seems to be ripe for a more vigorous and united effort on the part of the people of this section of the country to press their claims, which are reasonable claims, since they deal with a situation which is no longer tolerable. It is refreshing to know that in these our unremitting efforts to secure due recognition of our righteous demands the committee in charge note with pleasure that they are highly endorsed in their arduous task by the Boards of Trade of Moncton, Shediac and Port Elgin. The way is open and the question must be pressed to a satisfactory conclusion.

By order,



THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Cape Bald, N. B.

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SCALE-MILES

 Proposed New Line
 Existing Lines Canadian National Railways
 Public Roads along Proposed New Line
 Provincial Boundary between NB and N.S.

