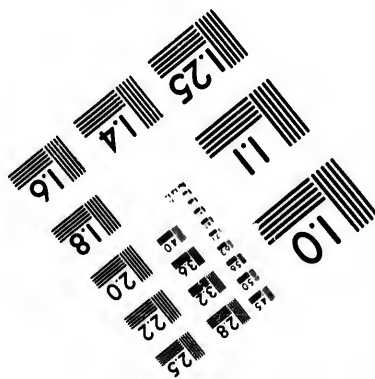
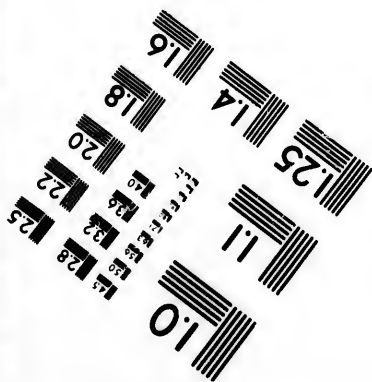
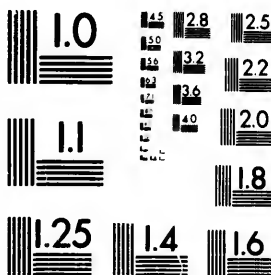


**IMAGE EVALUATION
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10



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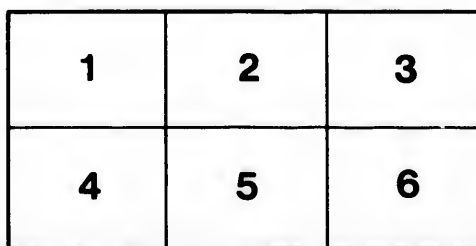
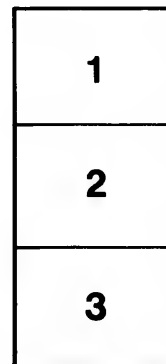
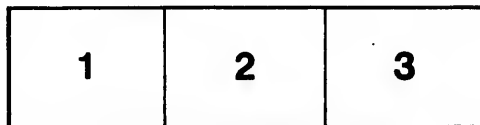
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*Letter from S. Fleming to R. S. Aytoun, Esq., M. P.*RAILWAY OFFICE. }
Halifax, April 24th. 1867. }

R. S. AYTOUN, Esq., M. P., London.

Dear Sir,—A gentleman who was recently in England as one of the Delegates to promote the Confederation of the British North American Provinces, received by the last mail a private letter which rather reflects on my character in connection with some observations said to have been made by you in the House of Commons, hence the liberty I now take in addressing you.

The gentleman referred to, viz., the Hon. Jonathan McCully, very kindly favored me with an extract from the letter referred to, and allowed me to make use of his name but the name of his London correspondent I do not know. The letter is dated London, 30th March, 1867, and the extract is as follows:

“It is said here that Sandford Fleming inspired Mr. Aytoun several years since against the road, and that he based his opposition to it upon Fleming’s correspondence with him. You had better read this to Fleming so that he may know what is said of him. Aytoun, it appears, referred to some private man connected with the road, and in debate said to Adderly that if he named the party he (Adderly) would not dispute his capacity to judge. I heard this myself, and several in my hearing said it was Fleming, and referred to a conversation in the lobby the previous evening in which Aytoun was said to have specially named Fleming as being an acquaintance of his family and in correspondence with him, and was the party from whom he got the information which induced him to oppose the guarantee for what he considered a worthless line going through a desert.”

When I inform you that I have occupied an important official position in connection with the undertaking, you will readily perceive how damaging the charges implied in the above must be to my reputation, and that I must naturally be desirous of exculpating myself. In this I find it will be necessary to allude to the *only time*

I ever had the pleasure of meeting you, and to the nature of my business at that period.

In the spring of 1863 I visited London, in the interest and at the request of that isolated Colony in the interior of British North America, known as the Red River Settlement, and in order to promote so far as lay in my power the establishment of a line of communication from Canada to the Settlement and hence to British Columbia. Learning that I was in London on public business, and that I originally hailed from the constituency which you represent in Parliament, you very kindly sent me a note of invitation to lunch with you at your private house on a certain day. On reference to my diary I find that on Tuesday, 16th June, I called in accordance with this invitation at your house, at half-past one o'clock, had lunch with you, your mother, and Miss Aytoun, and left before four o'clock.

This is the only occasion, so far as I remember, I ever had the pleasure of meeting you, and I am quite certain that I never, before nor since, (until the present moment) wrote a line to you or to any member of your family on any subject whatever. It is quite possible that the projected Intercolonial Railway may have been alluded to, amongst a variety of other subjects, at your table on the occasion referred to, but I could scarcely have said anything respecting the country through which it is intended to run, to which much importance could be attached, as up to that time I had never seen either Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, or set foot on any part of the country between Quebec and Halifax.

My mind, at that period, was mainly occupied with the immediate object of my mission to London, viz., the opening up of a road through the wild unoccupied districts between Canada, the Rocky Mountains, and British Columbia; and I think it more than likely that I asked you to accept a copy of a Canadian Parliamentary publication on this subject, and which embraced some rather lengthy observations on a proposed system of constructing Railways and roads, generally, through unsettled districts.* In these observations the Intercolonial Railway is alluded to incidentally, and it is shown that the proposed system for building lines through countries in a condition of nature, might, with advantage, be adopted, should all other means fail in securing this important and much wanted link of connection between the several Provinces.

* *Vide* Canada Sessional Papers, 1863, No. 83.

It is just possible that your mind may have been impressed with some information in the blue book referred to, or it may be, some casual remark, thoughtlessly uttered at your table, and forgotten the next moment. I can conceive of nothing else. If from the blue book, you can have received no information from me in an improper manner, or of an objectionable nature, inasmuch as it was laid before the Colonial Secretary, His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, as well as before all the Provincial Governments, long before it was placed in your hands; and some time afterwards the Imperial Government, as well as the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, did me the high honor to appoint me to the office of Engineer, when it was first proposed to begin the surveys of this important line of Railway.

The above is a statement of facts, so far as I know or remember them. If I am in error, will you kindly correct me? If the statement is correct, will you be so good as confirm it? I am quite ignorant of having done or said anything that I would recall, or that I am ashamed of, and my main object now is to give an emphatic denial to the charges brought against me, viz.:

1. That I inspired you in your opposition to the guarantee for the Intercolonial Railway.

2. That although filling an important official position in relation to the undertaking, I have been secretly in correspondence with you with the view of defeating it.

3. That I have actually furnished you, in an underhand way, with information acquired in my official capacity as Engineer, and which information induced you to oppose the measure.

These are the only inferences that can be drawn from the letter recently received by Mr. McCully, from his correspondent in London. I assure you they are utterly repugnant to me, and I am perfectly certain, whatever be your views respecting the policy of building the Railway, you will readily relieve me from all imputation of a dishonorable nature, in the very little intercourse I have had with you.

Pardon me for this rather lengthy communication, and believe me,

Yours faithfully,

SANDFORD FLEMING.

Letter in reply from R. S. Aytoun, Esq., M. P., to Sandford Fleming.

LONDON, 33 Upper Brook Street, }
Park Lane, 8th May, 1867. }

DEAR SIR,—

I have received your letter of the 24th April, and regret to hear that an impression has been produced among some persons connected with the Colonies, that you had been in correspondence with me, and that it was in consequence of information I received from you that I opposed the guarantee for the Intercolonial Railway. I never had any correspondence with you about the Intercolonial Railway, and the only time I ever had the pleasure of seeing you was when you were in London in 1863. You were then, I believe, interested in the Red River Settlement, and I requested you to call on me here, which you did, and we had some conversation about the Red River Settlement. I remember also that, being strongly opposed to guarantees for Railways, or indeed for any other objects in Canada or in any other Colony, I asked you some questions about the country through which the Railway would pass, &c., but you came here to discuss the question of a road to the Red River Settlement, and not to discuss the Intercolonial Railway, and anything you may have said about the Railway was only in answer to questions from me. This was the only occasion on which I ever had any conversation with you; and I certainly never corresponded with you either before or since that time about the Intercolonial Railway or any other subject. I think this is quite sufficient to show that there is no foundation for the assertion which you say has been made, that you have been endeavouring to excite an opposition in the House of Commons to the guarantee for the Intercolonial Railway.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed)

R. SINCLAIR AYTOUN.

Fleming.

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