

(1)

MEM. In all cases by the right or left bank of a river, I mean the right or left proper - i.e. Descending

I assume the starting point to be the left bank at the Puente rapids.

From this point to Okanogan the shortest and best route for travelling with horses is by striking off from the Columbia some 6 or 7 miles above the rapids to the "Grand Coulee", a natural ravine which cuts across the bend of the Columbia and again approaches close to the river below the Spokan Forks.

To reach Okanogan the trail leaves the Coulee a short distance below a small lake called the Lac a l'eau. Here one of the few watering stations in that extensive ravine - This trail (the ordinary travelled road) strikes the Columbia a few miles above Okanogan.

The "Grande Coulee" presents the appearance of what might be imagined to be the dried up bed of a river - say of the Columbia diverted by some extraordinary convulsion of nature at some long by gone period - It furnishes an excellent line of communication entirely free from obstacles for ordinary purposes. For a telegraph line it is however not suitable from the entire absence of wood for posts.

Water is only found in several spots at very long intervals.

I think the river was preferable though a little longer. Wood is scarce along the river. It may however be procured in two ways - during the freshets by securing drift trees carried down from the mountains, and by rafting from the Conlie des Pins, a point of Woods some 30 miles below Okinagan - The drift wood is preferable as there is among it much cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) commonly called the "Red Cedar" the most durable wood in the country and always preferable where it can be obtained as well for durability as lightness.

N.B. At the N.B.C. post at Okinagan all the wood for building purposes as well as for firing used to be obtained, by securing the drift trees during the spring and summer. A few Indians were supplied with ropes and with their canoes effected the desired object.

I should suggest crossing the Columbia some distance below Okinagan, say at the first favorable point above the mouth of the Riviere du Sidarotte.

This river falls in above the "Grande Rapids" it & the Piscalross both fall in on the opposite side (on the right bank).

From this proposed crossing there is a good level tract all the way to Okinagan the same deficiency of wood always existing.

As there would be no object in following the Columbia all the way to the mouth of the

Okanagan the line might diverge at the first favorable point and the angle saved by striking the Okanagan some distance above its mouth.

Either side of the Okanagan could be followed. The travelled road is on the left bank. It is shortened owing to one or two cuts off.

The whole of the Okanagan valley is very practicable the chief portion consisting of sandy levels.

Wood is scarce save along the stream where there is in most parts a fringe of poplars. About the forks of the Jimilkameen there is a growth of stunted pines on the summits. A supply of these could be obtained with some labourers -

From the nature of the soil they grow in they would I fancy be very durable for posts.

I have only noticed them from a distance and take them for the "Douglas pine" a good wood.

I state this preference more from habit than ought else having always gone by that route in going to Kamloops, if anything it is a trifle longer than the Jimilkameen route which altogether I believe is the preferable one.

Were I on my way to Alexandria from the forks I should prefer the old "Burgade trail" by the way of Kamloops.

For your purposes however the Jimilkameen route is perhaps preferable and I should therefore consider it.

The lower part of the Jimilkameen river

is very rugged. For this reason we follow the line indicated on the map attached to my published Pamphlet, Passing by the Crow Encampment and striking the Jimilkameen at the commencement of the level valley. The Okmagam should be crossed above the junction either below the lower lake or between the two lakes, both sides being alike level and under the same disadvantage for wood, save that on the east side it might be obtained more easily from the back country.

There are no difficulties along the Jimilkameen, the greater portion of the distance consisting of level flats interrupted occasionally by rocky hill sides covered with wood. These at low water are avoided by travellers by fording so as to reach the alternate flats on the opposite sides. Of course a telegraph line would continue along the same side (the left) on which the stream is struck and along it the Government road is now. I presume continuously improved.

The prevailing timber is the red pine, which you will know by its red, scaly bark, and long pendent fronds. This (the *Pinus Ponderosa*) is as its name intimates, very heavy and is moreover very subject to decay in the open air. For this reason though useful in the form of boards for indoor work it is entirely unfit for posts.

(5)

The Douglas pine where procurable should be selected where Cedar cannot be had.

I may here mention that the red pine in question prevails wherever there is a growth of wood from the Priests Rapids upwards to some distance beyond Kamloops. It ceases (by the Brigade trail) at Bonapartes River near Green Lake.

There is excellent pasture for animals all along the Similkameen.

The dry gravelly flats are interspersed with fertile bottoms in spots. The Prickly Cactus and the Rattlesnake attest the warmth and dryness of the soil.

The Rattlesnake however does not extend beyond Thompsons River the Cactus as far as Alexandria.

Arrived at the point called on my map Tenehameen or the "Red Earth" fork the question you proposed to me comes up. At this point or near it the village of Princeton is. I am told, now established.

I should strongly dissuade your attempting to continue the line hence to Fort Hope. In the first place I see no object to be gained by it. In the next you will abandon a most eligible line of country for a rugged and difficult one more than twice as long to reach the crossing of the Thompson.

Owing to the narrowness of the valley

approaching Hoop, moreover (I allude especially to that of the N. Calasoun) snow shdes would be very apt to destroy the line frequently. I take it therefore for granted that you will throw this divergence entirely out of contemplation save, if, necessary, hereafter as a branch line to start then from the Red Earth Fork

From that point to the Lac de Nicholas the distance is 45 miles through a level valley well watered, with good pasture and a sufficiency of wood without the necessity of clearance in any part save occasionally a few poplars at the water courses

From the point where the road strikes Nicholas Lake near the East end to Kamloops 29 miles through a similar country

Total Red Earth to Kamloops 74 miles

From the Red Earth to near the west end of Nicholas Lake the road follows the same line as above to within a few miles of the east end of the Lake say 40 miles. Thence it diverges and passes through a valley running parallel with the lake and strikes the Nicholas river near its junction with the cold water river say 10 miles thence to the Forks Nicholas & Thompson 30 to bridge or ferry the Thompson 1 mile

Total Red Earth to the Ferry or Bridge on Thompson

(6)

above Lytton

(4)

81 miles

The road down the Nicholas runs along its right bank. The left bank is hilly and wooded the right is plain and level with the exception of a few lines near the mouth where it is hilly but still clear of wood - Excellent pasture throughout To carry the line along the right side it would necessitate two crossings, one on reaching the river the other near the mouth to get to the Ferry or Bridge (I believe the bridge is nearly completed) The breadth of the Nicholas is about 50 yards Rapid at high water. Fordable at low. Sufficient timber for all purposes -

To reach the same point by Bridge or Ferry by Hope the distance would be nearly as follows

Red Earth to Hope	70 miles
" Yale	12 "
" Lytton	58 "
" Ferry	24 "
Total Red Earth to Ferry via Hope	<u>164 miles</u>

N. B. These distances are from my notes taken in '46 & '47' by the road as now made it may be a little less but not much.

I have now placed you at two points on the Thompson - viz. Kamloops and the Ferry on the wagon road. The first computed at 74 the latter at 81 miles from the Red Earth by

the inland track. The "Brigade trail" passing at Kamboos, unites with the Lytton Road at a point called Bridge Creek. I enclose a few memorandums in regard to the first

N. B. The line might be advantageously carried along the edge of Gushwap Lake instead of along the road which is hilly in parts

From Kamloops to end of Gushwap lake, clear, drift wood for posts along the river and lake	19	W by N
To Clear Water river open country clear road in parts	12	SW by NW
Cross Clear Water - 12 yds wide to Riviere du Defont	7	{ NW W NW
Cross R. du Defont. 12 yds ascend a high hill steep. Then along summit	6	N
To a Beaver swamp	6	SW
To East end of Loon Lake	11	{ NW W NW
Loon Lake to Bonaparte River	9	{ NW W NW
Cross Bonaparte 30 yds ascend a high hill clearly wooded		
To Chaine de Lacs	7	SW
To Green Lake	7	{ SW W E
Strike from the Butte or Green Lake a mean course nearly North to the Bridge Creek	21	N
	<u>105</u>	miles

Nature of the Country

9
Kamloops to end of Lake clear of wood end of
Lake to R. du Defont quite open in parts
elsewhere thinly wooded with Red Pine and
Douglas Pine. a high hill at each side of
the R. du Defont that on the east clear of
wood on the west a steep hill as already
noticed, thinly wooded, R. du Defont to
Beaver swamp wooded with trees of no great
diameter chiefly Douglas Pine and Pines
Banksiana a few closely resembling the Scotch
Firs It is of very good quality Beaver Swamp
to Loon Lake chiefly open, with spots of clear
woods.

Loon Lake to Bonaparte clearly wooded
(Red Pine ceases a little beyond the Bonaparte)
To Green Lake open in parts clearly wooded in
others

To Bridge Creek the greater part wooded some-
what similar in character to the point
between R du Defont and the Beaver Swamps
Hard bottom throughout

The above remarks regarding the tract
lying between Kamloops and Bridge Creek
are from my own observations and I give them
therefore with confidence as being very nearly
correct. From the lower Ferry or Bridge to the
same point I give on the authority of others
as I have never travelled by the present line
of waggon road between these two points

Ferry on Thompson below the mouth of
Nicholas River

To Mc Leans on Bonaparte	30 miles
" Junction with Road	22 "
" Bridge Creek	53 "
	Total 105 miles

By a coincidence the distances (both computations being assumed as correct) are precisely the same. The last 53 miles are described as woody throughout - the character of the woods similar to that noted between Redw Defont and the Beaver groups. There is little available pasture in this tract of 53 miles.

Red Earth to Bridge Ck	
via Kamloops $74 + 105$	179 miles
" Nicholas R $87 + 105$	186 "

This gives a balance of seven miles in favor of the former. The line of country too is on the whole more favorable but the latter line is preferable in two respects 1st the advantage of the Bridge over the Thompson (if completed) whereby the cropping of the wires would be facilitated 2nd the advantage of the wagon road for conveying material.

From Bridge Ck to Alexandra the two roads unite and continue together with some deviations. I give my own notes by the old Brigade Trail

To Johnson Creek	10	SW by S
" end of Lac a la Pucche	1	SW SW
Lac a la Pucche	12	W SW
To East end of Columbian or Williams Lake	23 1/2	SW
Lake	6	W
To foot of hill	3	SW
Point of Woods	7	SW SW

(This point of woods may be avoided by following down the valley to the main River and then following upwards - It is longer however)

To Fork of Roads	5 1/2	SW SW
To Mud Lake	7	SW
To Bank of Fraser again	4 1/2	SW
Along the Fraser to Alexandria	9	SW by W

Total Bridge Ck to Alexandria by Brigade Trail 88 1/2

I find that the ragged road is now laid down and measured is 97 1/2 miles. If my computation of distances be correct therefore the Brigade trail has the advantage of shortness by 9 miles. Of course I cannot insist upon my own correctness still I am inclined to think my estimate is not far from the truth and the more so for this reason, namely that I rode the distance accompanied by my servant on the same horses between Jim and Jim in June 1846 say from 4. A.M. to 6 P.M. The general character of the country is open, there is a short point of

woods leaving Bridge Creek, Another between
Lac a la Pache and Williams Lake a third
further on as noted, and again between
Mud Lake and the river.

Good hard bottom and fine pasture throughout
N. B. The deviations of the Wagon Road
are from a few miles beyond Bridge Creek
to the east end of Lac a la Pache and again
from the East end of Williams Lake to the
point I call above "Forks of the Road"

Abstract of distances

Okinagan to Forks of Smilkameen	60
To Red Earth	80
To Kamloops	<u>74</u>
	214
To Bridge Creek	105

To Alexandria by Brigade Trail	88 1/2
Okinagan to Alex ^a via Kamloops	<u>407 1/2</u>

I should not consider it advisable to follow
along the Fraser beyond Alexandria - The open
country ceases a few miles above that point at
Fortina close by the post there is an excellent
point for crossing. The river is here about 200 yds
wide from Bank to Bank at high water. There
are divers objections to following the River line
1st. It is longer. 2nd. Thickly wooded and
liable to frequent fires 3rd. Between Alexandria
and Fort George land slides are constantly

occurring owing to the peculiar formation of the banks. Tracts of various extents from a few acres to upwards of a thousand are thus frequently precipitated into the stream causing divergences of the channel - a line of works would be liable to frequent interruption from this cause.

To reach Stuart's Lake the line I should judge preferable would be by following the horse trail opened across the country to Fraser Lake. Thence across the divide to Stuart's Lake. good guides could be procured at Alexandria. The country generally is thinly wooded with many open spots.

There are meadows at intervals where hay could be procured a necessary provision for winter operations with horses. The trail crosses West Road River pretty high up and continues towards a chain of lakes called Saicur, Noolky and Taachy. Thence to the Nechaco River immediately behind the fort on Fraser Lake.

The Fraser Lake branch of the main river to be crossed just at its junction with the Nechaco to a plain on the opposite side. Then by the horse trail over the divide to Stuart's Lake 45 miles.

Rather thickly wooded with a light growth of timber - This is a general indication of the line I should recommend beyond Alexandria. By inquiry on the spot you can obtain full particulars, but as I have travelled over,

a considerable portion at both ends of this route (without having at any time traversed the whole from end to end) I can safely predict that you will find it the most eligible to obtain the point in view

So far I write from personal observation but I have never travelled further in the direction of Babine Lake. I will however note down what information I have got from others

The point where the Horse road strikes Stuart's Lake is called the Montie. It is about 9 miles from Fort St James. There is a horse trail from the Montie to the Babine Portage at the end of Stuart's Lake, thickly wooded in most parts. From the end of S. Lake to Babine Lake 9 miles there is a good waggon or cart road used by the N.B.C. to transport supplies across

From the other end of Babine Lake the most acceptable route to the sea is from what I have learned as follows

Following down the Babine River a certain distance then striking over from the left bank by the Indian Portage to the Rocher Deboule or "Fallen Rock" on the Skeena River and following down that stream to its issue at Port Eslington some 40 miles south of Fort Simpson. Thence to the fort

(15)

The Nap river issuing about the same distance to the northward of Fort Gimpson is thus avoided. The shores of the latter river (as I have mentioned) are very impracticable in the lower parts.

The mouth of the river too is almost inaccessible in the winter months owing to the violent gales that then blow downwards almost without intermission.

It was for this reason that the N. B. Co. Post (formerly established about 5 miles up the Nap) was in 1834 removed to its present position (Fort Gimpson).

General Remarks

In general the Indians are very sparsely scattered throughout the line indicated. Guides could be always procured, but for hard labour they could not be depended upon. From the Babines coast-wise, however they are more numerous and especially near the coast a good deal of Indian labour might be available.

The natural resources of the country cannot be depended upon to any extent for provisions. From the Babines down to the coast however excellent salmon can be obtained in large quantities during the fishing season.

Snow begins at Alexandria (on the

river levels) about the beginning or middle of November and last till about the middle of March. In the back country it falls earlier and lasts somewhat longer.

Horses of a tolerable condition in the fall, pasture well throughout the winter.

The best feeding ground is at the East end of Williams Lake.

At Stuart & Fraser Lakes the snow falls generally about the end of October and lasts till near the end of April.

This on the Lake levels in the back country earlier and later.

Fodder is indispensable for horses during winter. In summer the pasture is very rich. Natural Hay can be cut in the Beaver Meadows &c in large quantities.

These lakes are navigable between the middle of May (say from the 5th to 10th May) and the early part of November. The river between Alexandria and these lakes, closing early in November is open again about 19th April.

This was the usual date for starting with the Brigade of boats from Stuart Lake. The date of the opening of the river and lakes varies a few days in different years.

At Kamloops horses winter well.

It is one of the best pasturage grounds in the country. Snow rarely lies there to any depth or for a long continuance.

The Grande Prairie about 30 miles from Kamloops on the Brigade trail towards Okinagan is a spot particularly favorable for wintering stock.

I have now jotted down whatever memoranda it struck me might be useful to Mr Conway.

Should there be any special points that I have omitted on which information might be required. I shall be happy to supply the information if notified by Mr Conway.

Rosebank. Gaanick. V.I.

10th July 1865

(Signed) Alex^r C. Anderson.

Anderson on the
country between
the Fraser R. and
Shant Lake.