

To the Council of the City of Winnipeg

Gentlemen - Having at your request as expressed by resolution passed the 15th September last visited Ottawa for the purpose of bringing under the notice of the Dominion Government your wishes and that of the people of Winnipeg in reference to railroad matters, and particularly to your desire to have the Pembina Branch cross at Winnipeg, I take the earliest opportunity on my return to report. I left Ottawa on the 18th Sept. and arrived here on the 27th day of the same month. On the following day I waited on the Premier Hon. A. McKenzie - He had already received the resolutions passed by the citizens of Winnipeg in mass meeting assembled, and also the memorial from the Board of Trade, as well as the resolutions of the City Council. He had also received notice of my being sent on behalf of the Council, and was consequently prepared to receive me, which he did very cordially. I explained the object of my mission going over the substance of the resolutions and memorial above referred to, and supported our views and wishes as strongly as I could, the principal point being the bringing of the Pembina Branch into Winnipeg by means of a railroad bridge across the Red River, and the continuation of the branch to the main line from the City of Winnipeg on the West side of the river. I referred to the last delegation which waited on him, when he promised to have the necessary surveys made to ascertain the difference in length and cost between the lines

on the east side of the river and that on the West
and also the probable cost of a railroad bridge.

He informed me, the surveys and calculations had
been made, and showed me a plan, and read
for me a portion of a report prepared by his
Engineer, giving the required information. On
his plan three lines were laid down for the proposed
continuation of the Branch, from the point at
present ordered to be graded to, in a straight line
to a point on the main line about a mile
from the river, being a proposed town laid out
by the Government. - Length of this line $27\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
The other line on the East side came to the
same point, but instead of going in a straight
line, it designed so as to touch the Bank of the
Red River opposite to that portion of the City called
Point Douglas. The length of this line $28\frac{3}{4}$ miles.
The third line that on the west side of the
river crossed at the City (at Point Douglas) from
thence to the outside of the two mile limit, and
thence northward to the main line. Length of this
line $30\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The difference in the cost of the
construction of the different lines per mile, was very
little, with the advantage rather in favor of the
East side, a gravel and sand hill on that side
being an advantage, rather, and rather less bridging
and trestle work being required. - According to the
Engineer's report, a portion of which the Purvis read
to me, the cost of the construction for railroad bridge
would be very great, although they had not yet
been

been able to make a full report. Soundings were
 now being made, and from these it appeared
 that great difficulty - was experienced in getting
 good bottom - The width of the river at low
 water mark is about 400 ft and at high
 water mark about 800 feet. The ~~approximate~~ ^{approximate} would
 of course make the bridge longer than that.
 The estimated cost could not be less than
~~250,000~~ \$250,000 and would be probably a
 great deal more - The report, on the whole was
 unfavorable to the construction of the bridge, and was
 in favor of adopting the shortest line. Mr. W. H. H. said
 that the extra cost involved in locating the
 line on the west side of the river, as the people
 desired, although being about three miles longer
 would not be an insuperable objection, but the
 Government were not willing to undertake the
 building of the bridge, a work in which they were
 not interested, and which he maintained was
 merely for the accommodation of the Citizens of
 Winnipeg and vicinity. I explained that it was
 asked for, not only by the citizens of Winnipeg, but
 by nearly the whole of the inhabitants of the Province.
 The object was to have connection with the road
 and South by means of other railroad for which
 charters had been granted, and which no doubt
 would be built. Unless there was a bridge at
 Winnipeg, great expense and trouble would be
 occasioned by transshipment and otherwise at that
 point. The City of Winnipeg felt the necessity of
 the bridge so much, that of the Government
required

require, it was willing to bear a portion of the
 expense. He seemed to doubt the ability of the
 City to do so. To dissolve this doubt on that
 point I gave him a summary of our last
 assessment roll showing the taxable property
 to be already nearly three millions dollars and
 the population about 6000. and also informed
 him of the fact that we had lately negotiated
 a loan for City improvements, about \$150,000
 of which was still unexpended. - a portion of
 which I thought might be used in the construction
 of the bridge, as the people felt the necessity of
 it so much, they were willing to make great
 sacrifices to obtain it. They would prefer, I thought
 to do without some of the improvements for which
 the money was obtained, rather than be without
 connection with the branch. I took the ground
 however that the Government should bear the
 whole cost of the erection of the bridge, for reasons
 I then explained, and which I need not here
 take space to mention. At the end of the
 interview which lasted some time, the Premier
 agreed to consult his Colleagues and he would
 then give me a final answer. A few days
 afterward I again visited on the Premier, having in
 the meantime brought the matter personally under
 the notice of the other members of the Government
 who were in the City and others who I thought
 might take an interest in the matter and use
 their influence in our favour -

At this second interview we discussed the question at considerable length, I tried to overcome his objections, but with very little effect as far as the bridge was concerned. He said that the Government were willing to accede to the wishes of the Citizens to a certain extent, that is, they had decided that the longer line on the east side of the Red River should be adopted although it would be two miles longer than the direct route, that it should deflected so as to come to the bank of the river opposite to the City, but as to the construction of a bridge, which would cost perhaps a half million dollars, that could not be done, as the Government could not undertake so great an outlay for a mere local work.

Having asked him what amount they would be willing to accept from the City and build the bridge. He said the Government could not entertain the question. In the course of our conversation I again mentioned the necessity of the building of the bridge in view of our connection with the Western & Southern railways. He said when these roads are built would be time enough to consider the matter.

The policy of the Government would then very likely assist in building the bridge as that was their policy. A case somewhat similar was now under discussion in one of the Maritime provinces, that is the connection of a local road with a Government road

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road by means of a bridge which they
were going to assist in erecting -

He had no doubt the same course would
be adopted by the Government in regard
to our bridge at Winnipeg. The Government
had agreed to give \$25,000 towards the
building of a wagon bridge at Winnipeg
which amount was already in the estimates.

These concessions he thought ought to
satisfy the people of Winnipeg. They had
already ordered the construction of the
grading to the point opposite Winnipeg.
I told him I would report the result
of my interviews, but I was sure that
the people would not be satisfied unless
the Government decided to build the bridge.
In my interviews with the other members
of the Government afterwards I found that
they nearly all entertained the same opinion
as the Premier. After leaving Mr. McLaughlin
I telegraphed his answer to you. Having
learned that the Hon. D. A. Smith M.P.
for Saskatchewan was in Montreal, I determined
to go there and see and consult with him
in reference to the matter. I found that
he took a great interest in it and
was resolved to do his best to carry out
your

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your wishes. He came to Ottawa and
waited on the Ministers and others, but
he informed me without his inducing
them to more formally consider the matter
to any great extent. Before leaving Ottawa
I invited the arrival of the Hon. Messrs.
Dawson & Royal to let them know the
position of matters as I indicated it. Knowing
that Mr. Dawson had particularly had
promised the City Council to use his influence
and that of his Government with the Dominion
Government to induce them to carry out our
wishes, a promise which I believe to
faithfully carried out. And here I might
say, in all my interviews with the
Premier he treated me as your Representative
with the greatest courtesy & consideration
and I may say the same of all the
other members of the Government and
those whom I dealt with. On behalf of
the Council I again invited the Premier
so as to better judge of these matters for
himself. He said he was anxious to see the
Committee but was afraid his engagements
would prevent him doing so for some
time to come. Probably he might get up next
year. I have now Galtier, in a
few words give you the result of the
mission you were so good as to have me
with

with. I have confined myself to the actual
facts leaving you to form your own conclusions.
In my own part, I do not take as gloomy
a view of our Railroad prospects as some.
We are safe in assuming, I think, that
the P.C. Railway will not be continued west
of Red River for some few years, in fact
the Premier in his Sarina speech said so.
Consequently the bridge on the main line will
not be built as it would not be required till
the road is continued west. In the meantime
the Pembina Branch is being proceeded with
to a point opposite the City, and it is hoped
that perhaps next fall we may have railway
communication with the South. Our City will
be rapidly growing in population and resources.
The Dominion Government is willing to assist
us in building our Railway from Winnipeg
to the South & West including probably the
Railroad Bridge at the City. I think we
will have a bridge at Winnipeg before
there is one north of us. In the meantime
the Wagon bridge should be built. It is
thought by the Engineers that a bridge
can be built for the sum set down in
the estimate. If not I have no doubt
if our Members (that is in the House of Commons
& Senate) use their influence for that
purpose, the Government will double the
amount

amount placing it at what it originally
was. Let us be true to ourselves.
Work together unitedly and we need have
no fear for the future prosperity of our
City. No influence that can be brought
to bear will prevent Winnipeg from being
one of the principal cities of the Dominion.
A leading and for seeing member of the
Montreal Board of Trade the other day
in writing about Winnipeg, said that
in 1900, the population of Winnipeg
would probably be 200,000, and I do
not think he was far astray.

Nature has done a great deal for
Winnipeg let us do the rest.

I submit with this report a
map showing the route of the Pembina
Branch as adopted by the Government.

I have the honor to be
Sincerely
Yours
Wm. H. Stewart
Mayor.