
R E T U R N

To an Address from the Legislative Assembly to His Excellency the Governor General, dated the 10th September; for Copies of the Instructions given by Government to Oliver Wells, Esquire, Surveyor, to explore the Lands situated on the River St. Maurice and its tributaries; of his Notes of such exploration, and also, of the Report and the Map drawn by the said Oliver Wells, in pursuance of the said instructions; as also, of all Papers and Documents relating to the steps taken by Government to open the Territory on the St. Maurice to the Timber Trade.

By Command.

A. N. MORIN,

Secretary.

Secretary's Office,

Quebec, 2nd November, 1852.

CROWN LANDS DEPARTMENT,

Quebec, 16th April, 1852.

Sir—You are required to proceed to the River St. Maurice, for the purpose of inquiring into and reporting upon the state of the Lumber Trade upon that River and its tributaries; the circumstances connected with applications made to the local agent, Mr. Bochet, for timber berths thereon; the extent to which the territory is occupied for lumbering purposes; the parties by whom it is so occupied; the position of the berths on which they are respectively at work; the extent of their operations, and the circumstances, authority, or pretext, under which they originally assumed the right of entering upon such occupation.

In order that you may be the better able to enter thoroughly into the scope and tendency of these instructions, so as to understand fully the nature of the duty required of you, I shall enter into a brief review of the circumstances which have rendered this investigation necessary, and of the object to be attained by it:

Until within the last year, there had been little notice taken of the Territory drained by the St. Maurice, and its tributaries, as a field for lumbering operations, for although it was generally supposed that there were large quantities of good timber thereon, the obstructions to the navigation of the river were of too formidable a nature for private enterprise to grapple with, and until these obstructions were overcome or removed, it was not possible that the timber could be made profitably available to any considerable extent. With a view, however, to ascertain the resources of the country, a survey of the river was ordered by the Government, and instructions for such survey issued by this Department to Messrs. Bignell and Legendre, in 1847, and the result of their surveys having been made known through the Journals of the House of Assembly in 1850, many parties evinced a

desire by applying for limits, or otherwise, to avail themselves of the field which so extensive a Territory, not yet taken up, presented for the purpose of forming establishments for the manufacture of timber; but still, although the resources of the country had become partially known, as the same formidable obstructions existed to prevent or impede the descent of the timber, it was only in course of the past year, when it became generally known that the Government had determined upon the construction of slides and booms, which would open the river to the enterprise of the trade, that the applicants for limits, or timber berths, became very numerous or eager.

It has been generally the practice (and you will perceive it is so provided for in the 12th clause of the General Regulations) when any new Territory was thrown open to the operations of parties engaged in the manufacture of timber, by means of surveys, or in any other way in which any considerable expense was incurred, to put the berths thus rendered available to the trade, to sale at public auction, between the parties desirous of obtaining them; this practice has been considered advisable with a view to the two-fold object of reimbursing the Government by means of the bonus on the berths, payable, for the right to obtain licenses, by the highest bidders, for the expenses incurred as above stated, and of giving the public at large an equal chance of obtaining, by fair competition, any benefit accruing from the Government expenditure.

Previous to the current season, (commencing with the first of May last) the Territory drained by the St. Maurice and its tributaries was like any other part of the country, under the general regulations, open to the enterprise of any individual who thought he could make the timber thereon available, and any one might have obtained license in the ordinary way, subject to the ordinary conditions, and conferring the usual privileges, for although the surveys executed by Messrs. Bignell and Legendre would have been sufficient ground for withholding licenses until the river should be thrown open by a general public sale, there was no object in doing so, as the surveys, without any improvement in the navigation of the River, conferred no such additional value upon the timber as to make the berths worth competing for.

But when the improvement of the river was determined upon, it at once became necessary to suspend the granting of licenses until an opportunity for fair competition could be afforded to the public at large, in the manner already stated. On account of a change which was then in contemplation, affecting the trade generally, instructions were sent to the respective Crown Land Agents throughout the Province, on the 30th April last, (1851), being the day on which all pre-existing licenses (which necessarily terminate on that day in each year) expired, to suspend the granting of any licenses, either for new limits, or by way of renewal of those formerly held, till further orders; this general order rendered any special instructions, with reference to the St. Maurice, unnecessary, until the proposed change in the system had been determined upon.

Such change was embodied in the regulations of 8th August, 1851, and on the promulgation thereof, *special* instructions were at the same time communicated to Mr. Bochet, to the effect, that the Territory drained by the St. Maurice was not to be opened for licenses until arrangements, then in progress, were completed, when further instructions were to be sent him.

Mr. Bochet, however, mis-apprehending the effect of his instructions, seems to have imagined that, although he was prohibited from conveying or selling certain privileges, such as licenses confer, he was yet at liberty to *promise* such privileges, and in the mean time accept the price of them. He accordingly continued to receive applications and accept money as deposits before, and as ground rent since, the regulations of the 8th August, 1851, were published, for which he gave receipts conveying promises that the licenses, for which such moneys were received,

would be granted; this mis-apprehension of his instructions by the agent, embarrassed and delayed the action of the Department in respect to the plan intended to be adopted for throwing open the timber berths on the St. Maurice to the competition of the public, until the whole subject, as far as information could be obtained, was brought under the consideration of the Government, and the legal opinion of the Honorable Attorney General Drummond obtained in relation thereto, and on that opinion the action now to be taken will be based.

As it has, therefore, been determined that the mere applications for certain limits or berths, while the functions of the Agent in relation thereto were suspended, or the payment of moneys therefor, which were improperly received by the Agent, or promises made by him, cannot constitute titles, which he, the Agent, had no authority to convey, and the timber cut by those parties who have entered without any legal title upon various portions of the Territory, is subject to seizure and confiscation. Such, however, would be a measure of extreme and unnecessary severity, and one never resorted to, except where the protection of some party aggrieved by the trespass calls for it, or when the law has been intentionally resisted or evaded, whereas in the present instance, the parties having been, in some measure, misled by the local authority, they may fairly claim to be entitled to favorable consideration, and to be dealt with leniently by the Government, and consequently it has been determined to exact only the ordinary Crown dues upon the timber they have cut.

The Territory, however, will be laid off into timber berths, with a view to public competition, in the manner already described, wholly irrespective of the applications hitherto made, or moneys received, or promises given, by the local Agent.

There are nevertheless, certain classes of claims recommended, and still further entitled, to the favorable consideration of the Government, and which I shall classify according to the distinctions existing between them: the parties entitled to such favorable consideration will be, first, Those, (if any) who have regularly held license for specific limits and duly occupied the same in terms of the regulations, prior to the first of May, 1851, and who were consequently, under ordinary circumstances, entitled to have obtained the renewal of such licenses during the past summer for the current season.

2nd. Those (if any) who, although they may not actually have taken up licenses, yet took all the necessary steps to procure them, entered upon the occupation of specific berths, and laid out money in the improvement thereof, on the faith of the then existing regulations, prior to a knowledge of the intention of the Government to improve the river having got abroad, (which may be presumed to date from the period at which instructions were issued from the Department of Public Works for an estimate,) and prior to the order suspending the granting of licenses.

3rd. Those (if any) who, under the general misunderstanding conveyed by the action of the agent, have entered upon the occupation of specific limits, which they were led to believe they would obtain, and have expended sums of money in making improvements of a nature to be available beyond the operations of the current season. The Berths actually occupied by any of these classes, you will lay out upon the map, and report the particular circumstances connected with each case, for the further action of the Government upon consideration of the merits thereof.

4th. Those who have applied for berths for the supply of Saw Mills actually established on the river, and in such a position that they cannot derive a supply of logs from any other quarter: with respect to this latter class you will observe that it has always been the policy of the Government to encourage such establishments, on account of the greater field thereby afforded for labor, and the evident tendency they have to create villages, and otherwise promote the settlement of the country, and on this ground saw-logs have always been charged at a lower rate

than square timber, until a late period, when a distinction was made upon its becoming known that a considerable quantity of saw logs were exported (in the log); this immediately led to the charge on logs, so intended for exportation, being raised to double the price of logs intended to be sawed within the Province.

With respect to this first class above adverted to, it will not be necessary to extend your inquiries beyond the season which terminated on the 30th April, 1851, because any license which may have been held for any term previous to that, unless it had been renewed in terms of the regulations up to that period, could not be recognised as conveying any claim whatever; in other words, when a license expires on the 30th April, it still conveys, by virtue of the regulations, a claim to renewal, provided all the conditions were complied with during the time it was current, provided no special cause exists to the contrary, such as the land being required for settlement or other public purpose by the Government, and provided a certain specific course indicated by the Regulations be pursued in order to obtain such renewal; failing the steps necessary to obtain any renewal, the claim to it falls to the ground, and the berth becomes as much vacant and open to the next applicant as if the old license never had existed; consequently, any license of a previous date, which had fallen to the ground before the Regulations were suspended, can exercise no influence whatever; but those limits for which licenses were held up to the 30th April, 1851, and in respect to which the necessary steps were taken to obtain license for the current season, will come under the first head.

With respect to the second class, you will observe that by the Regulations, when an application has once been determined by the agent to have precedence upon unsurveyed lands, the applicant has a period of three months allowed him before it becomes necessary for him to take up license: If then, any person having applied, and obtained assurance that he was the first applicant, and therefore entitled to obtain the license, commenced operations and incurred expense, and only then became aware, before the expiration of the three months, that the order to suspend the granting of licenses had intervened, his case would come under the second head, and in fact with regard to any claim his position would give him, it would be difficult to make any distinction between him and those who may be entitled to come under the first head: the number embraced in these two classes, it is presumed, will be extremely limited, but the distinction in their position from that of others is important.

The third class, it is also presumed, will be extremely limited, it needs no further explanation except that you will distinguish between limits of this class occupied for ordinary lumbering purposes, and those occupied for the supply of Saw Mills, which would thus bring them under the fourth class. Having therefore laid out and described the berths coming under these heads respectively, you will proceed to lay out the remaining portions of the river into berths of given dimensions—irrespective of the promiscuous applications entered therefor—with an accurate description of each berth, by which it may be put up to sale, and which will be sufficient to designate it upon the license when issued, this will of course only extend to the River St. Maurice and such portions of its tributaries as have been surveyed, so as to enable you from the plans and field notes to make such accurate descriptions as may be depended upon; you will report also upon the extent you think under the circumstances, the scarcity or abundance of Merchantable timber, &c., the respective berths should embrace, as most adapted to advance the interest of the trade, or whether in that or any other particular you think any deviation should be made from the ordinary regulations; to assist you in coming to a conclusion on these points, I may remark that the berths licensed were at one period as large as ten miles square, and at an earlier period even larger than that: the object in allowing so large an extent to one berth seems to have been to encourage the enterprise of individual lumberers who, in order to induce them to improve and open up remote parts of the country, and to make streams navigable which were not naturally so, required to obtain extensive limits

to assure them of a supply of timber for a number of years, during which they could calculate upon being remunerated for the very heavy expenses they had sometimes to incur for the above object; at present ten miles by five is the maximum extent which the regulations allow to one berth: for a short period, commencing in 1846, the maximum extent was fixed at five miles by five, but the effect was found to be injurious to the trade as tending to produce too great a supply. You will consider these different points, and how far the country drained by the St. Maurice, &c., is prolific in Merchantable timber as compared with other lumbering districts, in determining whether and to what extent a deviation from the maximum size at present allowed to timber berths would be advisable, bearing in mind as a reason against too extensive limits, that at least until such a distance is reached as that other serious obstructions occur, the berths have all been made accessible by the Government expenditure, and not by the means of the individuals obtaining them: and as a reason against making them too small, the injurious effect a similar movement already had, and the tendency which the opening of so large an extent of lumbering country for the manufacture of timber may have under any circumstances, to increase the supply beyond the demand.

You will report also upon such reliable information as you can obtain, and from personal inspection, in so far as you may deem it necessary, of the tributaries of the St. Maurice which are as yet unsurveyed, as to the resources thereof in Merchantable timber, and as to what streams it would be most desirable to proceed with the survey of immediately with a view to their being laid out into timber berths, and thrown open to competition.

You will report further upon the resources of such parts of the country as may come under your observation, or in regard to which you can obtain reliable information in an agricultural point of view, and direct attention to points where settlements could be advantageously established, and where immediate surveys for that purpose would be advisable, and notice generally any other features in the character of the country worthy of remark.

Finally you will at such time and place, as you may find most convenient, ascertain the quantities of timber and logs cut on the waste lands of the Crown by the respective parties lumbering on the St. Maurice and its tributaries, and having ascertained the said quantities you may settle with the parties at the usual rates and on the usual terms, whenever a proper disposition is evinced, bearing in mind that all the timber has been cut without legal authority; and is therefore subject to seizure and confiscation, in which respect you are only to carry out the law in case of any resistance being offered, or payment, either in cash or by bonds signed by the principal and two sufficient surities, refused.

You will observe also that the Act, 12 Vic. cap. 30, gives you the power to compel the parties to furnish statements *upon oath* of the quantities of timber or logs they have cut, and the rendering of any false statement, or the attempt to take advantage of any such false statement, subjects the timber on which the Crown dues are attempted to be evaded to forfeiture: this clause of the law applies even when the timber has been cut under legal authority, and should any attempt of the kind be made in the present instance, you will seize the timber in respect to which such attempt may be made as having been cut in trespass.

Your instructions in this instance do not embrace the agency of Henri Lor, Esquire, which comprises the county of St. Maurice, but it is probable that instructions will be sent you with reference to that portion of it from which the timber will descend by the St. Maurice River, and in the mean time you may make such information as you can obtain in relation thereto available, but you will remark with regard to the timber cut within that agency, that the case wears a different legal aspect from the other, and on which the Honorable Attorney General has not yet had an opportunity of giving an opinion.

You may also consult with Mr. Lor, who resides at Three Rivers, as to the best means of securing the Crown dues on all timber liable thereto, descending the St. Maurice, and avail yourself of any assistance he can give. The property known as the Jesuits' Estates will not be subject to your action at present either, unless special instructions be sent you relative thereto. Any information which you can however obtain upon the subject, in respect to timber, you will report to the Department. The property appertaining to the Jesuits' Estates in that part of the country comprises the seigniories of Cap de la Madalaine and Batiscan.

Your pay in this special service will be 20s. per diem; your expenses, considering the peculiar nature of the service, it would be difficult to specify, you will therefore be allowed the actual amount incurred, of which you will furnish an account in the manner directed in the printed copy of "general instructions" to Surveyors; and it is with confidence in your judgment and discretion I would impress upon you the necessity of the utmost economy consistent with the efficient discharge of the important duty confided to you.

You will call upon Mr. Bochet for any information you may require from him relative to his transactions as agent in addition to the notes you have already made from his reports.

I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed,) JOHN ROLPH.

OLIVER WELLS, Esquire,
Surveyor.

QUEBEC, 12th August, 1852.

Sir,—In conformity to your instructions, of date the 16th April last, I would respectfully report that I have made an exploration of the Territory drained by the River St. Maurice, to as large an extent as it was believed the present requirements of the Timber Trade would justify me in doing.

In the performance of this service, I have ascended nearly all the tributaries of the St. Maurice, as high as Weymontachingue, distances varying from 15 to 120 miles, according to the size and importance of the rivers, but always carrying my exploration sufficiently far, to be able to base an estimate of the value, and amount of timber which each river would be likely to yield, from my own observations, and not from the reports of others.

I will detail, in as few words as possible, the general characteristics of the country which I have traversed, the nature and extent of its resources, and the means which I conceive best adapted to make those resources profitable to the Government and the people.

SETTLEMENT.

The greater part of the Territory under consideration is poor land, being generally either light and sandy plains, or if undulating, as on receding from the rivers, the soil is then hard and the face rocky and mountainous.

It is thence not adapted for settlement, and would not justify the Government in making any expenditure either for surveys, or otherwise, with a view to its settlement. There are, however, extensive meadow lands along nearly all the rivers. In places hay may be cut to an almost unlimited extent, and in other parts, the outlay of a small amount of labor in clearing the land would give a like result. These meadow lands are valuable, and upon them, as the lumber trade progresses, settlements will undoubtedly be established to a greater or less extent.

TIMBER.

Nearly the whole district passed over, and of which I herewith forward a plan, abounds with White Pine timber. Immediately upon the rivers, the quality of the timber is apt to be poor and subject to knots and shakes or rots, but on leaving the streams, we meet with table land and high swells, containing, both upon the side hills and in the valleys, thrifty Pine mixed with hard wood. Excepting upon the River Matawin, there is very little Red Pine. The general character of the land, and features of the scenery, are very similar so those of the country along the Ottawa and tributaries, between Pembroke and Lake Temiscaming. The revenue which will be derived to the Government from the timber in the St. Maurice District, under proper management, may be safely estimated at £8,000 annually.

RIVERS.

The St. Maurice River receives 24 tributaries, between Three Rivers and Weymontachingue, of sufficient size to be made available for the purposes of descending timber. These are as follows :—Commencing at Weymontachingue, namely, the Rivers Manouan, Petit Rocher, Petit Flamand, Windigo, Flamand, Coucoucacha, Preriche, LaTrenche, Vermillion, Croche, Rivière au Lait, Bastonais, Petit Bastonais, Petit Ruisseau, La Montagne, Des Caribous, Rat River, Wesoneau, Petit Batiscan, Rivière à l'Oiseau, Bete Puante, Matawin, Miguinac, Rivière à Lac des Pêches, Shawinigan. The obstructions which these rivers present to the descent of lumber are easily surmounted.

It is true that shoals occur frequently, and that boulders would often require to be removed, but generally a slight expense, either in removing rocks, or in the construction of side dams or guide booms, would render the descent of timber easy and expeditious.

All the branches of the main River St. Maurice traverse a Pine country, and many of them receive large tributary streams which also afford Pine to a greater or less extent. The chief part of the streams above enumerated retain their water nearly at the height of the spring freshets until late in the season ; a fact which is of material advantage to the lumberman.

In the accompanying field notes, I have given detailed minutes of the size and character of each river, as far as I have carried my explorations, with the nature and extent of the improvements required.

ISLANDS.

It is believed that the Islands in the main River St. Maurice or tributaries should not be sold, or conceded, but should be retained by Government for the use of lumbermen. They are frequently required for rafting or collecting timber, or for booming for its security. The concession of the Islands would also necessarily throw too much control over the river into the hands of private individuals.

ROAD,—QUEBEC TO ST. MAURICE TERRITORY.

It will be seen by referring to the accompanying plan, that a road, leading from Quebec to the heart of the Lumbering District of the St. Maurice, would be shorter by some 15 or 20 miles than the present route from Three Rivers along the bank of the River St. Maurice. Many good reasons may be assigned in favor of opening this communication, of which it will be sufficient for me to mention one or two. The present winter road from Three Rivers to the Lumbering District, follows partly upon the ice, which upon the River St. Maurice is at all times unsafe and difficult. Where it leaves the river the banks are generally high, rough and mountainous, thus presenting continual obstacles in their natural features. There is also a continual liability to interruption from the accumulated masses of drifting snow, to which a road on the banks of so large a river is subject. On the other hand, the distance from Quebec will be less, and it is evident that this communi-

cation will be a material advantage to Lumber Merchants in transporting supplies from the city. It will also form an opening for a large amount of labor, which during every winter season is here without employment. The cost of opening such a winter road will not exceed £3 15s., or £5 per mile, exclusive of bridges. An estimate of these cannot be given until an exploration be made, but it is of course understood that they should be only simple pole bridges, such as lumbermen usually build at a trifling expense. The distance required to be cut out would probably be 50 or 60 miles. The expense of the preliminary survey or exploration, at the usual estimate of £3 per mile, would be from £150 to £200; if judiciously managed, it could not exceed £200.

SURVEYS.

It will be necessary that surveys be made for defining and bounding the Timber limits without loss of time—present applications for berths are numerous and pressing, and unless measures are taken to grant licenses before the ensuing winter, no lumbering will be done to any extent until another year. I would not recommend that the rivers be regularly surveyed and admeasured, but that cursory surveys be made, and that the Surveyor employed be instructed to ascend the river or rivers which shall be designated to him, without chaining; and at each five miles, (which any experienced practical Surveyor can estimate within a distance of 20 or 30 chains,) to plant plain and well defined boundaries, numbering the limits upon each side of the stream—the whole subject to future surveys, should the Department see fit to incur the expense. By following this method, the Surveyor can bound and define about 30 miles of front each day, whereas, if a regular survey be made, the average distance reached is only 2 or 3 miles. If plain land marks be planted on each river, separating the limits in front, no disputes can arise as to extent or locality, and all the necessary results of a regular survey would be had at much less expense. The average cost of surveying each river, of from 80 to 100 miles in length, in the Ottawa, Saguenay, and other Districts, has usually been from £400 to £600,—whereas a survey of a similar river, in the manner now proposed, may be made for from £30 to £50, and every object connected with lumbering equally well attained. The rivers which it would be desirable immediately to lay off into limits are, the Rat River, Vermillion, Flamand and Matawin, on the Westerly side of the St. Maurice, and the Croche, Trenche, Bastonais and Miguinac, on the Easterly side; after which the survey might be extended to others of equal importance, but for which the applications are less pressing.

SALE OF LIMITS.

With respect to the sale of licenses, whether it will prove more advantageous to dispose of them by auction or by private sale, it is not easy to decide. While it is intended to prevent monopoly, or too great an extent of Territory from falling into the hands of one or more wealthy individuals, it must also be borne in mind that it is the enterprising men of capital who make up the wealth of a country, and that they will not invest capital, unless there is a reasonable prospect of encouragement. This could not be the case, if occupied limits, upon the expiration of licenses at the end of each year, were exposed to sale by auction, as it is evident the stranger could afford to bid a higher *bonus* than the occupant who should have built shanties, cleared out rivers, and made other outlays upon the limits. In case the berths be adjudged by auction, upon the completion of the surveys, I would respectfully suggest that it might be advisable, in the mean time, to grant licenses to certain individuals who now have applications before the Government, and who are making outlays in the Territory. I do not, however, consider this measure as involving a question of right, but merely one of expediency. I have only to add, that I believe the method proposed by the Honorable Attorney General East, in his Report of March last to the Council, “upon granting licenses in the Territory of the River St. Maurice”—as also, the suggestion before the Council, under the same

head, by Mr. Dawson, of the Crown Land Department, to be suitable and well digested.

AGENCY,—DUTIES OF AGENT.

In order to render available the wide field of wealth which the St. Maurice opens to the country, it will be necessary that regulations be framed and carried out by the Council, specially adapted to this Territory, and that an Agent of integrity and practical experience suited to so responsible a trust, be appointed. This Agent should have under his charge the whole Territory drained by the River St. Maurice, as well as certain other parts of the Counties of Portneuf, Champlain, St. Maurice and Berthier, and should have his office at Three Rivers.

The Agent should be required to perform the duties of "Surveyor of Licenses and Collector of Crown dues, and also of Superintendent of Public Works;"—he should himself be capable of surveying into limits the Territory placed under his charge, which would make an annual saving to the Government of about £500, and should also be instructed to visit and inspect the limits under his charge, during each winter's operations, so as to be assured that parties do not trespass upon grounds not covered by their licenses.

Where parties claim exemption from Crown dues on a part of their timber, he should compel such parties to produce *procès-verbaux* of survey, by a sworn Surveyor, identifying the position of the timber, with attested receipts from individuals of the number of pieces for which exemption is claimed;—he should report to the Collector of Timber Dues "at Quebec," previous to the departure of any raft from the public booms, at Three Rivers, the proprietor of such raft, total number and description of pieces, number of pieces (if any) *exempt* from duties, as also the names of Lumber Merchants in Quebec with whom the proprietor may be connected, and every other information which may serve to facilitate the "Collector of Dues," at Quebec, in the discharge of his duty. Parties should be instructed by the Agent to report the *arrival* of their raft to the "Collector of Timber Dues," immediately on reaching Quebec, and in all cases where proprietors of timber are dilatory in fulfilling the requirements of the Crown, he should at once seize the timber, or take other stringent measures to enforce a prompt performance of the regulations. It is, of course, understood that every lumberman, on taking his license, shall be properly notified of such requirements, and the preliminary steps necessary for clearing timber should be taken early in the season, in order that no vexatious delays may arise after the opening of navigation. Holders of licenses should also fully understand, that they are to cause a survey to be made, at their own expense, of the front and side lines of their respective limits, of which surveys the returns are to be lodged in the office of the Agent. Side lines to be surveyed at right angles with the general direction of the rivers. In addition to his usual returns, the Agent should also report to the Government, the number of berths he conceives necessary to be sold each year, in order to answer the requirements of the trade.

PUBLIC WORKS UPON THE RIVER ST. MAURICE.

The St. Maurice District possesses an obvious advantage over others in the Province, by its nearness to the market; this will afford facilities to the lumberman to avail himself of the best market prices of the season, and is by no means an unimportant consideration; and when we take into account the wide extent of Territory, rich in valuable forests of timber, hitherto unexplored, but which the Public works now in progress of building upon the river will open to the public; and when we further consider that the annual revenue accruing to the Government from the rents and duties, cannot be less than £8,000, but will probably much exceed that sum, it must be allowed that the investment is a good one. A proof that the above sum of £8,000 is not an over estimate of the revenue that will be derived

from the Territory, (if proof were wanting) is had, in the fact that during the past season, while the works were yet incomplete, a small amount of lumbering has been done by five or six individuals of limited means, and the timber they have cut will yield to the Government, in Crown dues, something over £2,500.

I would respectfully suggest:—

1st. That an Agent be immediately appointed for this District, the nature of whose charge I have already endeavored, in part, to point out.

2nd. The performance of the necessary surveys, without loss of time, to the extent and in the manner hereinbefore defined.

3rd. The immediate sale of licenses to several individuals, whose limits I will designate in an additional report and plans.

4th. That in case the Government sell the limits by auction, subject to the renewal of licenses each year, that such renewal be granted without exposing occupied limits to competition; that is, that only ungranted and unoccupied limits be sold by auction.

5th. That the expediency of appropriating a small sum for the purpose of opening a road from Quebec to the St. Maurice be taken into consideration.

6th. That should there prove any deficiency in the grant for the construction of the slides, guide and retaining booms on the River St. Maurice, a further sum be appropriated sufficient to complete the works.

7th. That special regulations, suited to this District, be framed and adopted by the Council.

Accompanied herewith, I forward a plan of the country which I have explored, as also field notes, shewing the details of my operations, and the character of each river and improvements required. I shall also transmit to you a separate Return and plan, specifying the area and locality of reservations for the present occupants of the St. Maurice, and other papers connected with the present existing Agencies of the District.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and humble Servant,

(Signed,)

OLIVER WELLS,

Provincial Surveyor.

The Honorable the Commissioner

of Crown Lands,

&c., &c., &c.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
1st Session, 4th Parliament, 16 Victoria, 1853.

R E T U R N

To an Address from the Legislative Assembly for Copies of Instructions to Oliver Wells, Esquire, Surveyor, to explore Lands on the River St. Maurice and its tributaries.

ON MOTION OF MR. POLETTE:—
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