FURTHER PAPERS

RELATING TO THE

ALASKA BOUNDARY QUESTION.

Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Executive Council, approved by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, 9th November, 1885. No 199

The Committee of the Executive Council have had under consideration the urgent necessity for the early adjustment and proper delineation of the boundary line which divides British Columbia from the adjacent Territory of Alaska.

While reiterating the reasons and arguments advanced in the Minute of the 22nd July, 1884, they desire still further to urge the subsequent and continuing mineral discoveries on both sides of the supposed boundary line, as affording cumulative and most cogent reasons for immediate action in order to the removal of present embarrassment and avoidance of possible international complications, which would undoubtedly tend to render adjustment more difficult.

The Committee recommend that this Minute be approved and a copy thereof, together with a copy of the Minute adverted to above, forwarded to the Honourable the Secretary of State.

Certified,

(Signed) JNO. ROBSON,
Clerk Executive Council.

Receipt of the above was acknowledged by the Honourable the Secretary of State for Canada in a despatch to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, dated 26th November, 1885.

Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honouable the Executive Council, approved by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor 30th November, 1885. No 208

The Committee of Council have had under consideration the proposition of the Dominion Government to exhibit at the Colonial and Indian Exposition, to be held in London next year, a mammoth map of Canada, to be prepared expressly for the occasion, and the possible bearing upon the disputed boundary line between British Columbia and Alaska such a work might have.

As clearly set out in a Minute of Council, dated July 22nd, 1884 (to which, and the accompanying maps and sketches, earnest attention is respectfully requested), the true boundary according to the terms, and in the precise words of the Convention between Great Britain and Russia in 1825, is in part as follows:—

"Commencing from the southernmost point of the Island called Prince of Wales Island, "which point lies in the parallel of 54 degrees 40 minutes North Latitude, and between the "131st and 133rd degrees of West Longitude (Meridian of Greenwich), the said line *shall* "*ascend to the north along the channel* as far as the point of the continent where it strikes the "56th degree of North Latitude,' &c., &c.

Referring to a map or chart, it will be seen that the boundary above described would "ascend to the north" through the Duke of Clarence Strait, and thence along the western leg of Behm's Canal till "it strikes the 56th degree of North Latitude."

The map of Canada, published by authority of the Dominion Government in 1880, unfortunately reproduces the common error of carrying the line in an *easterly*, instead of a northerly, direction from "the southernmost point of the Island called Prince of Wales Island," to and up Portland Channel, thereby depriving the Crown of a large and valuable territory and important waterways.

The Committee desire respectfully to point out the importance of avoiding a repetition of that error at a time and under circumstances calculated to prejudice the boundary dispute.

The Committee would take this occasion to reiterate and strongly press the argument presented in the Minute of July 22nd, 1884, and in the Minute of the 9th instant, as to the urgent importance of an early settlement of the boundary dispute.

The Committee advise approval of this Minute, and that a copy be forwarded to the Honourable the Secretary of State for Canada.

Certified,

(Signed) JNO. ROBSON,
Clerk Executive Council.

Receipt of the above was acknowledged by the Honourable the Secretary of State for Canada in a despatch to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, dated 12th December, 1885.

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