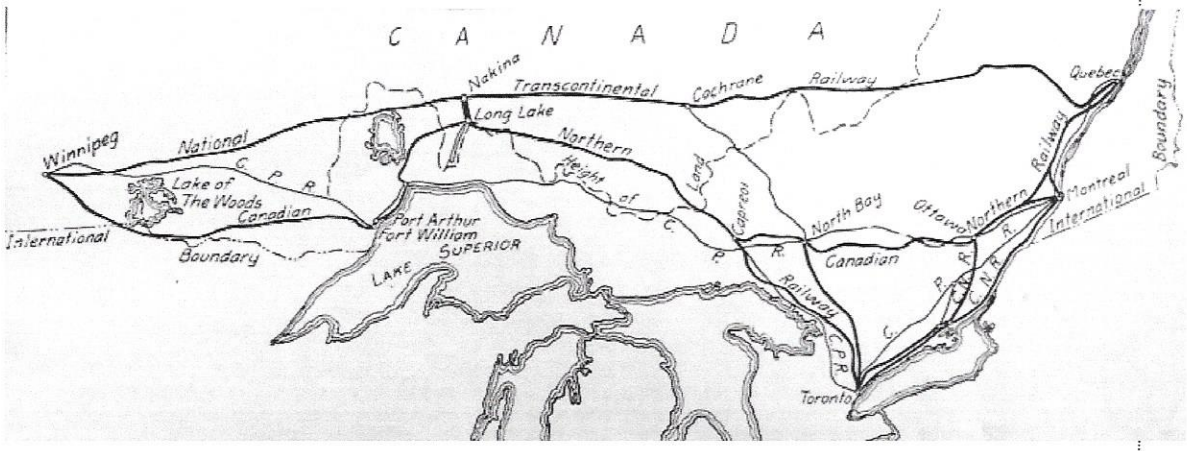
CNR'S LONGLAC-NAKINA 1923 CUT-OFF

January 1924, No. 311 Canadian Railway And Marine World (Toronto) Page 13, col. 1

LONGLAC-NAKINA CUTOFF, CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS, COMPLETED.

The Canadian National's cutoff between Longlac, Ont., on the Canadian Northern main line from Montréal to Winnipeg, 480.7 miles northwest of North Bay, and Nakina, on the National Transcontinental, 272.25 miles west of Cochrane, has been completed. From the time when the Canadian Northern Ontario and National Transcontinental Rys. were built, the possibly of this connecting short line had been discussed, and W. F. Tye, formerly Chief Engineer, Canadian Pacific Ry, indicated its advantages in a paper on *Canada's Railway Problem And Its Solution*, published in *Canadian Railway And Marine World* for Feb. 1917. Under D. B. Hanna's management of the Canadian National, prior to the Grand Trunk's absorption in the system, the project of building the cutoff was seriously considered, S. J. Hungerford, then Vice President, Operation and Maintenance, having developed detailed figures to show the savings to be effected. The difficulties, chiefly financial, facing the management at that time, however, were too great to permit of construction beginning at once. The original reconnaissance survey for the connection was made in 1917, by H. K. Wicksteed, then Chief Engineer of Surveys, Canadian Northern Ry., and his assistant, H. T. Morrison. In 1919, Mr. Morrison made trial and location surveys under Mr. Wicksteed's direction, and in 1922, as Locating Engineer, Canadian National Rys., he made a revised location survey under direction of H. T. Hazen, Chief Engineer, Canadian Northern Lines east of Port Arthur.



Longlac-Nakina cut-off in relation to previously existing lines.

The principal objects in building the cutoff, which is 29.7 miles long, were to effect a saving in distance over all previously existing routes between east and west, and to do away with the necessity of dropping down from the height of land to Lake Superior level and then rising again to Winnipeg. Also, the Longlac-Nakina line will enable Canadian National management, if considered desirable, to discontinue the operation of passenger trains over the T. & N.P. between North Bay and Cochrane. The length of the various routes affected by the cutoff's construction are as follows:

	Miles
Canadian National Rys.—Toronto to Winnipeg—	
Via Capreol and Port Arthur	1309.0
Via North Bay and Cochrane	1256.6
Via Capreol and Longlac cutoff	1207.0
Canadian Pacific Ry.—Toronto to Winnipeg—	1232.4
Canadian National Rys.—Montréal to Winnipeg—	
Via Capreol and Port Arthur	1459.2
Via North Bay and Cochrane	1372.2
Hervey Jct. and N.T.Ry.	1387.5
Via Longlac cutoff	1357.1
Canadian Pacific Ry.—Montréal to Winnipeg, via M. & O. short line	1411.6
Canadian National Rys.—Québec to Port Arthur—	
Via Joilette, Ottawa and Capreol	1172.0
Via N.T.R., Longlac cutoff and C.N.R.	1073.2
Canadian Pacific Ry.—Québec to Port Arthur vai St. Martin's Junction and Hull	1139.4

The foregoing figures show that the cutoff's use shortens the distance between points in eastern Canada, and Winnipeg, by 102 miles, and between Québec and Port Arthur by 99 miles, the latter being an important factor in connection with the haulage of grain for export from the head of Lake Superior to the Atlantic seaboard. The geographical relationship of the points between which the route lengths are affected is shown by the accompanying sketch map. The large saving to be effected through avoid the long drop down to Lake Superior level and the long uphill haul back to height of land is demonstrated by the two profiles given herewith, one of the National Transcontinental between Nakina and Winnipeg, and the other of the Canadian Northern between Longlac and Winnipeg. The elevation at Longlac is 1034 ft. above sea level; at Fort William it is but 613 ft., while at Huronian, 92.9 miles west of Fort William, it is 1,571 ft. A train proceeding from Winnipeg to Longlac via the Canadian Northern would drop 958 ft. between Huronian and Fort William and would then be faced with a climb of 499 ft. to the summit

(elevation 1123 ft.) 16.3 miles west of Longlac, while if it used the National Transcontinental route, this long fall and rise would be avoided.

Longlac-Nakina cut-off, Canadian National Rys.

Authority for the cutoff's construction was given by a Dominion order in council on Dec. 22, 1922, which, after setting forth the line's location, the advantage to be gained by its construction, etc., at some length, concluded as follows: "After the construction of the proposed cutoff, it is estimated that there will be an annual saving of $389,200 in the movement of traffic; further, that a large increase in passenger traffic will accrue as the result of shorter schedules, which will make possible an estimated annual increase in earnings of $600,000, without any material increase in expenses. It is further observed that the total estimated cost of the work will aggregate $1,944,006, including the removal of the new terminal facilities from Grant to the new junction point, and that sufficient funds are available to provide for any expenditure up to March 31, 1923, but, that in the view of the fact that the proposed work will obligate the Government to the above mentioned expenditure, $1,944,006, it is considered that authority should be obtained before proceeding with such work. It is point out that if the work is not commenced immediately, a delay of one full season will result in the completion of the line, with consequent loss of profit; that, provided immediate authority is given to proceed with the proposed work, a great deal of preliminary work, such as making tote roads, arranging for supplies, establishing camps, clearing right-of-way, and excavating rock, can be performed advantageously during the winter, which will permit of actual construction work commencing as soon as the snow is off the ground in the spring. The Minister, therefore, on advice of the Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals, recommends that authority be given accordingly. The committee advise that the requisite authority be granted."

Government authority having been secured, no time was lost in receiving tenders for construction, and after spirited bidding (the names of the bidders being published in *Canadian Railway And Marine World* for Feb. 1923), the contract for the clearing, grading and bridge work was awarded to Foley Bros. and Hervey, the members of this firm being Foley Bros., St. Paul, Minn., and Brig. Gen. Chilion Hervey, D.S.O., C.E., Montréal. O. W. Swenson, Secretary-Treasurer of Foley Bros., was placed in charge for the

contractors, and immediately went to the scene of the work. Preliminary work commenced on Jan. 6, 1923. Lnglac was chosen as the contractors' headquarters, and also for the Canadian National's Engineering Department staff. The first work was the construction of camps and the cutting of tote roads. A large camp was built at Longlac, and intermediate camps at miles 10, 19, and 24 from Longlac. With the letting of grading sub-contracts, smaller camps for the sub-contactors'' men quickly spring up along the line. January and February were devoted largely, in addition to right-of-way clearing, to getting in material and supplies, which were teamed in. In addition to the ordinary supplies common to any railway construction work, as food for men and horses, tools, bedding, etc., the contractors teamed in three caterpillar type Erie steam shovels, and enough coal to operate them for some months, a number of small gasoline locomotives, and 1 1/2 yd. side dump cars, and a sufficiency of narrow gauge track rails. The steam shovels and small gasoline locomotives were used only in the earth excavation, which ran heaviest between miles 19 and 26 from Longlac. This equipment was teamed in from Longlac, but with the advantage of well packed winter roads, no particular difficulty was experienced in getting them to the desired location. The end of March saw the bulk of the supplies and equipment distributed.

The heaviest rock work was between Longlac and mile 5 therefrom. It was not necessary to wait for spring to start the rock-cuts, and grading on this end was well under way early in February. Nothing could be done on the earthwork until spring, however, and the grading between miles 19 and 27 from Longlac, where the heaviest earthwork was located, did not get under way till May. Good progress was made on both rock and earthwork, and by Nov. 1 the grading was practically completed. Approximately 125,000 cu. yd. of rock and 600,000 cu. yd. of other material were handled.

The cutoff leaves the Canadian Northern main line at Longlac at just about the height of land between the Hudson Bay and Lake Superior drainage areas. To nine people out of ten, mere mention of the "height of land" conjures up a picture of a rugged mountain chain, with very steep slopes down which the waters run with no hesitation as to which course they are going to pursue, and through which a railway could be located only after the conquest of almost insuperable difficulties. Nothing is further from the truth, however; locating engineers join with the voayageurs of the north in testimony that a wilderness traveller may cross and recross the height of land many times and not be aware of the fact, so slight and gradual is the change in the direction of

slope. Despite the proximity of the height of land in this case, no outstanding engineering difficulties were encountered. As shown by the accompanying location plan of the cutoff, curvature is light. The maximum has been restricted to 4 degrees and the maximum gradient if 0.4% in both directions. Where the cutoff leaves the Canadian Northern line, the elevation is 1,032 ft. above sea level, and at the junction with the National Transcontinental Ry. it is 1,045 ft., and the summit on the cutoff itself is 1,085 ft. On emerging from the rocking country which extends for about 5 miles north of Longlac, long stretches of spruce swamp, the clay subsoil, are encountered. The north middle portion of the territory traversed is partly sand and gravel, and at the north end the country is again swampy. The numerous creeks, rivers and lakes so characteristic of the north country did not present any outstanding difficulties to the locators, and only 3 bridges of major dimensions were necessary, these being a 100 ft. plate girder span at mile 22.9 from Longlac, at the crossing of the Kenogamisis River; a 100 ft. through plate girder span at mile 13.7, at the crossing of Devilfish Lake, and a 52 ft. 4 in. deck plate girder span at mile 28.8, at the crossing of McDonald Creek. A number of concrete culverts were necessary at different points, this work being sublet by the contractors to Isbester & Bell, who established headquarters at Longlac.

As stated above, the grading was practically completed by Nov. 1. The rock work was the last to be finished. Tracklaying did not wait for the completion of all grading, but was started from the Nakina end of Sept. 5, a Roberts tracklaying machine and about 100 men being employed. Tracklaying was also started from the Longlac end of Oct. 7; no tracklaying machine was used there, but ties were distributed throughout the night by using tea,ms, and the rails were laid, gauged and spiked on the following day, a Brownhoist crane beign used to handle them. The tracklaying proceeded from the Nakina end without interruption, but that started from the Longlac end was held up at mile 5.2 for some time waiting for the completion of a large rock-cut there. The tracklaying gangs met shortly north of this cut on Nov. 18. The track was laid with 85 lb. steel, on untreated jackpine ties, and all curves were tied-plated.

Just as the tracklaying did not await completion of grading, ballasting did not await the completion of tracklaying, but was started as soon as a few miles of track were laid from Nakina. The first pit was put in at mile 26 from Longlac, and was handled by a Marion shovel with a 2 1/2 yd. dipper. When the track was laid to mile 15 from Longlac,

a second put was put in there, and a Bucyrus shovel of about equal capacity to that of the Marion shovel at mile 26 was installed. Trainfilling material only was hauled from the pit at mile 15. The pit at mile 26 supplied both trainfill material and ballast, the north 23 miles of the cutoff being ballasted with material from this pit. The south 6 miles were ballasted with material from a pit on the Canadian Northern main line, 32 miles west of Longlac. The ballast and trainfill material was handled in 30 and 40 yd. Hart cars, with the larger cars in the majority, using both and side plows. No center dumping was done. Ballasting was practically completed on Dec. 1. Tracklaying and ballasting were done by railway forces.

In connection with the building of the cutoff it was decided to remove the terminal facilities from Grant, the former divisional point on the National Transcontinental, 254.2 miles west of Cochrane, and 15.9 miles east of Nakina, to Nakina. Railway forces have completed the construction of a yard at Nakina, with capacity for about 400 cars, and of a 12-stall locomotive house of the usual arc design and concrete construction. They have also built a 65,000 gal. steel water tank, and installed an 85 ft. turntable, driven electrically, and have been some houses for employes. The coaling plant, of about 250 tons capacity, formerly at Grant, was moved to Nakina, as also were 3 double dwelling houses, all machinery from the Grand locomotive house, sash and doors, boilers, and a large quantity of brick. The Nakina yard was laid with relay rails obtained from western lines. The yard was ballasted with material hailed from Cavell pit, 14 miles west of Nakina, on the National Transcontinental main line.

The cutoff was built under the C.N.R.'s Operation and Construction Department, of which S. J. Hungerford is Vice-President, C. S. Gzowski being Chief Engineer of Construction. It was handled through the Central Region's organization, of which C. G. Bowker is General Manager; Major F. C. L. Bond, Chief Engineer; and H. T. Hazen, Assistant Chief Engineer. R. A. Baldwin, Engineer of Construction, Central Region, was in direct charge, with Capt. K. G. Polyblank as Division Engineer. The resident engineers and their territories were as follows: C.H. N. Spafford, Longlac to mile 7; H. L. Benson, mile 7 to 15; W. B. Redman, mile 15 to 22; Hector MacNeill, mile 22 to Nakina.

The cutoff has been attached to the Nipigon Division, Northern Ontario District, Central Region, under J. J. Napier, Superintendent, Hornepayne, Ont. It was first operated on Dec. 17, 1923, when a freight train ran from

Longlac to Nakina. A. A. Belanger, of the Board of Railway Commissioners' Chief Engineer's staff, left Toronto on Dec. 7 on the C.N.R. business car Quinte, to inspect the line, accompanied by R. A. Baldwin, Engineer of Construction, and some other C.N.R. officers. Beginning Jan. 6, when new working timetables will be issued, all through freight trains between Winnipeg and Ontario points will be operated via the cutoff. Passenger trains 3 and 4, heretofore routed via Port Arthur, will be operated via the cutoff, and the Montréal-Vancouver passenger trains, 1 and 2, will operate via the T. & N.O.Ry. between North Bay and Cochrane as heretofore. A new train will be put on Jan. 6, between Fort William and Port Arthur, and Longlac, to make connection with no. 4 at the latter point.

Railways: C.N.Rys., C.P.Ry., T. & N.O.Ry.

Stations: Cavell, Grant, Longlac, Nakina

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Longlac-Nakina Cut-off Construction, Canadian National Railways.

As stated in Canadian Railway and Marine World previously the Division Engineer in charge of construction is Capt. K. G. Polyblank, four resident engineers have been appointed as follows:—C. H. N. Spafford, formerly Assistant Engineer, Nipigon Division, mile 1 to 7; H. L. Benson, formerly Assistant Engineer, Nipigon Division, mile 8 to 16; W. B. Redman, formerly Concrete Inspector, Montreal Division, mile 17 to 23; Hector MacNeil, formerly Assistant Engineer, Chief Engineer's office, mile 24 to 30, including Nakina yards. Their respective headquarters will be about the middle of each section. The line has been revised and retraced. The clearing is well under way and two rock cuts on the south end of the line are open.

O. W. Swenson is in charge of the work for the contractors, Foley Bros., and Hervey, and R. J. Gjerdi is foreman. Four contractors' camps have been built at miles 0, 3, 11 and 18. The contractors are concentrating on supply and material delivery during the winter, on clearing practically the whole line, opening up rock work and building two of the permanent concrete structures at miles 14 and 29. They have sublet the teaming of supplies and materials and all the work opened.

1923

P. H. Fox, Assistant Superintendent,

Ontario District, [illegible]

Longlac-Nakina Cutoff. — The cutoff between Longlac and Nakina, Ont., 29.4 miles, described in Canadian Railway and Marine World for February, pg. 71, is practically completed, only a few miles of ballasting and surfacing, and some train filling, remaining to be done. At the time of writing (Nov. 20), the railway management is employing about 600 men on ballasting and track lifting. The greatest number of men employed at any one time by the contractors for the grading, Foley Bros. & Hervey, was about 1,200. Tracklaying was completed early in November, about five-sixths of it having been laid southward from Nakina. Untreated ties and 85 lb. steel were used. The track laying was done, and the ballasting and surfacing are being done, by railway forces, and at the time of writing the contractors have taken out a large part of their outfit, although they still have some men employed trimming the grade. Ballast is being drawn from three pits, two between Longlac and Nakina, one of which is supplying material for train filling only, and from a pit on the Longlac Subdivision. Ballasting will be completed and the track placed in condition for operation before the end of this year. As stated in a preceding issue, the intention is to remove the terminal facilities from Grant, 15.9 miles east of Nakina, to Nakina, and the yard at Nakina is nearing completion, as is also a 12-stall locomotive house there. Following the completion of these facilities, the yard at Grant will be taken up and terminal

December 1923

have four resident engineers under him. O. W. Swenson, Secretary-Treasurer of Foley Bros., also visited the locality early in January to make preliminary arrangements for the work. Both the C.N.R. and the contractors' headquarters for the work will be at Longlac.

Canadian Railway and Marine World for Dec., 1922, gave, on pg. 623, the reasons for building the connection, a description of the surveys made, a table of the savings in distances which will be effected, and particulars of the country through which it would run. The accompanying plan shows the connection's location. The curvature on the line will be very light, the maximum being 4°. The maximum grade in each direction will be 0.4%, compensated for curvature. The elevation at the point where the connection will leave the Canadian Northern Ry. is 1,032 ft. above sea level, and the point where it will join the National Transcontinental Ry. is 1,045 ft. The country to be traversed being fairly flat, the summit for the whole connection will be but 1,085 ft. above sea level. At the south end of the route there is a considerable quantity of rock, and on the balance of the line there are long stretches of spruce swamp, with clay subsoil. The north middle portion of the line is partly sand and gravel, and at the north end the country is again swampy. The principal bridges will be at the crossings of the Kenogamisis River at mile 6; the crossing of Devilfish Lake, mile 13.7, and the crossing of McDonald Creek, mile 28.8, at each of which places a plate girder span will be erected on concrete abutments. There will be 6 small pile trestles.

The article in our December issue gave details of the distances to be saved through the building of this connection, and the profiles of the Canadian Northern line between Longlac and Winnipeg, and the National Transcontinental line between Nakina and Winnipeg, given herewith, show the advantages to be derived in the matter of grades. Trains using the cutoff will not have to dip down to the Lake Superior level and climb up again; westbound trains will miss the long climb west out of Fort William, elevation 613 ft., to Huronian, elevation 1,571 ft., a difference in elevation of 958 ft., while the advantage in the way of grades for eastbound trains using the National Transcontinental Ry. and the cutoff, from Winnipeg to Longlac, compared with the Canadian Northern route from Winnipeg to the same point, is evident on comparing the two profiles.

The terminal facilities at Grant, the present divisional point, 264.2 miles west of Cochrane, and 15.9 miles east of Nakina, will be removed to Nakina next summer.

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order on the same day authorizing the opening of the connection for traffic.

Longlac-Nakina Cut-Off.—We were advised Oct. 20 that Foley Bros. & Hervey would complete their contract on time by Oct. 31, including grading, bridging, concrete work and everything pertaining to the construction, with the exception of track laying and ballasting, which C.N.R. forces are doing. Contractors bid on this work late in 1922, but the contract was not let for some six weeks afterwards. Foley Bros. & Hervey started in the latter part of Jan. 1923 to build camps and tote roads, but the six weeks they had lost delayed the work considerably, as they encountered deep snow which made the building of tote roads difficult. In addition to the original contract, Foley Bros. graded Nakina yard, which is a terminal of considerable extent, and involved quite an addition to the yardage to be moved under the original contract. O. W. Swenson, Secretary-Treasurer of Foley Bros., St. Paul, Minn., was in direct charge of the work, with headquarters at Longlac. At the time of writing (Oct. 22), some 16 miles of track has been laid from Nakina toward Longlac and somewhat less than a mile from Longlac toward Nakina. Cold weather and a heavy snowfall is reported, which will probably delay the completion of the track laying somewhat. (Oct., pg. 473.)

Neebing Terminal Yards.—The Board of Railway Commissioners has author-

rail to mile 22 from Hyde Park Jct.

Longlac-Nakina Cutoff.—A press report of Sept. 6, stated that 2 miles of track had been laid from Nakina, Ont., on the cutoff under construction, to Longlac. This line is being built to shorten the distance between eastern points and Winnipeg, by connecting the National Transcontinental Ry. and the Canadian Northern Ontario Ry. It is expected to be completed early in October.

Neebing Terminal Yard.—A press re-

September
1923

to Flinn Elevator [illegible]

Longlac-Nakina Cutoff.—Work is proceeding rapidly on the construction of the cutoff between Longlac, on the Canadian Northern Ry., and Nakina, Ont., on the National Transcontinental Ry., by the contractors, Foley Bros. & Hervey.

Kashabowie Subdivision Second Track. [illegible] Commissioners

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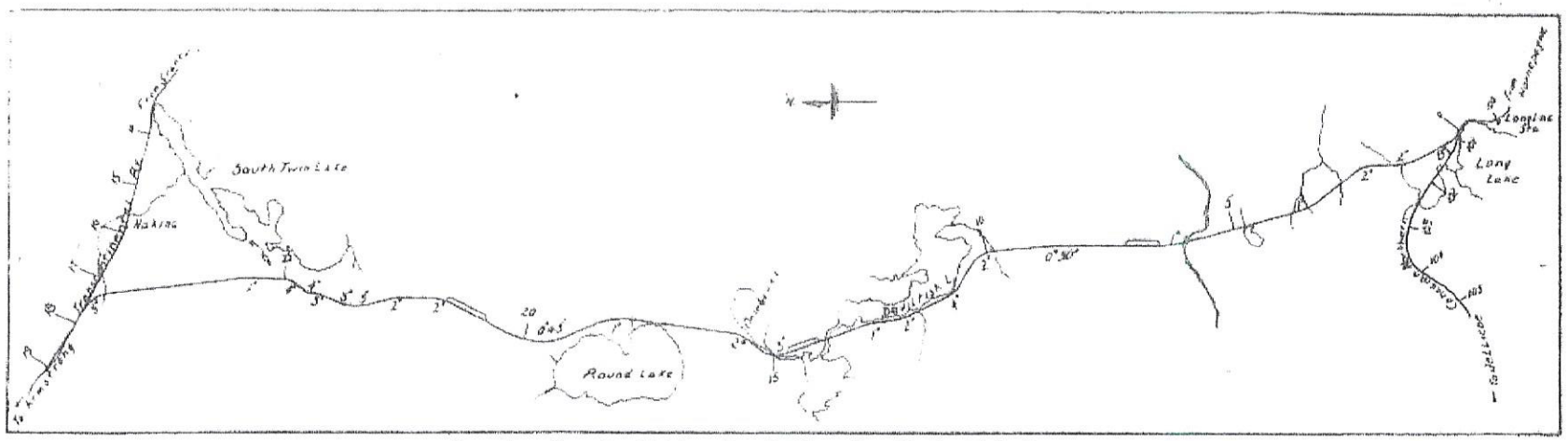
August 1923

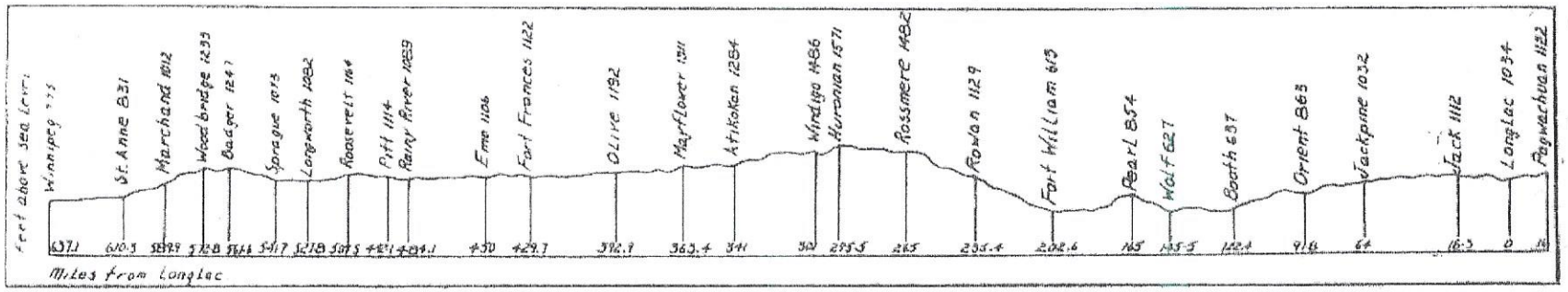
Longlac-Nakina Cut-Off Contract, Canadian National Railways.

The Canadian National Rys. management has given a contract for clearing, grading, culverts, timber bridging, and substructures for bridges on the 29.4 miles connection between the Canadian Northern Ontario Ry., near Longlac, 480.7 miles northwest of North Bay, and the National Transcontinental Ry., near Nakina, 272.25 miles west of Cochrane, to Foley Bros. & Hervey. The members of the firm are Foley Bros., of St. Paul, Minn., and Brig.-Gen. Chilion L. Hervey, D.S.O., C.E., Montreal. There was spirited competition for the work, among the other tenderers being V. T. Bartram and A. H. Britton; Chambers, McQuigge & McCaffrey; Hugh Doheny & Co.; Dominion Construction Co.; Johndian Northern Ontario Ry., to a point near Nakina station, 15.9 miles west of the divisional point of Grant, on the National Transcontinental Ry., authority be given to proceed immediately with the proposed work. It is observed that the proposed cutoff will shorten the route between points in eastern Canada and Winnipeg by 102.6 miles, and between Fort William and Quebec by 99.1 miles; the latter being an important factor in connection with the haulage of grain for export from the head of Lake Superior to the Atlantic seaboard; that, after the construction of the proposed cutoff, it is estimated that there will be an annual saving of $389,200 in the movement of traffic; further, that a large increase in of the line, with consequent loss of profit; that, providing immediate authority is given to proceed with the proposed work, a great deal of preliminary work, such as making tote roads, arranging for supplies, establishing camps, clearing right of way, and excavating rock, can be performed advantageously during the winter months, which will permit of actual construction work commencing as soon as the snow is off the ground in the spring. The Minister, therefore, on the advice of the Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals, recommends that authority be given accordingly. The committee advise that the requisite authority be granted."

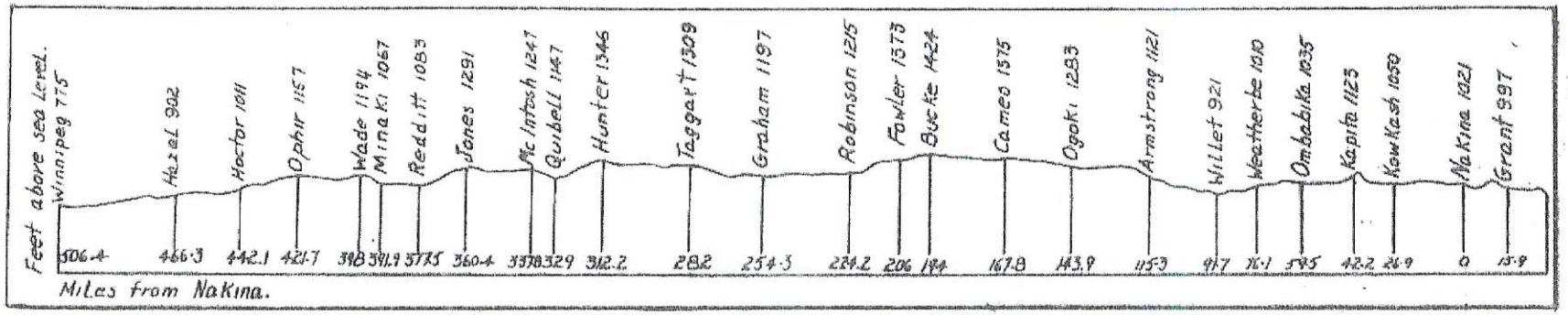
The work will be under the Canadian



Location, Longlac-Nakina Cutoff, Canadian National Railways.



Profile, Canadian Northern Railway, Longlac, Ont., to Winnipeg.



Profile, National Transcontinental Railway, Grant, Ont., to Winnipeg.

Profile, National Transcontinental Railway, Grant, Ont., to Winnipeg.

son Bros. & Tomlinson; R.A.R. & Ian R. Sinclair; Grant Smith & Co. and McDonnell, Ltd.

The authority for the construction was given by the following, which was approved by the Governor-General, on Dec. 22, 1922, and passed as an order in council:—"The committee of the Privy Council have had before them a report, dated Dec. 21, 1922, from the acting Minister of Railways and Canals, representing that the Chairman of the Boards of Directors and President of the Canadian National Rys. has submitted a report, recommending that, in connection with the Long Lake cutoff, which is a connection 29.5 miles in length, proposed to be constructed from a point near Long Lake station, at the most northerly point in Ontario, on the Canapassenger traffic will accrue as the result of shorter schedules, which will make possible an estimated annual increase in earnings of $600,000, without any material increase in expenses. It is, further, observed that the total estimated cost of the work will aggregate $1,944,006, including the removal of the terminal facilities from Grant to the new junction point, and that sufficient funds are available to provide for any expenditure up to March 31, 1923, but that, in view of the fact that the proposed work will obligate the Government to the above mentioned expenditure, $1,944,006, it is considered that authority should be obtained before proceeding with such work. It is pointed out that if the work is not commenced immediately, a delay of one full season will result in the completion

National Rys. Construction Department, of which M. H. MacLeod, C.E., is Vice President, the engineering being under the direction of H. T. Hazen, Chief Engineer, Canadian Northern Ry. Lines East of Port Arthur, who visited its locality in the middle of January, having been preceded by H. T. Morrison, Locating Engineer, C.N.R., who was engaged on the preliminary surveys and made the final location one, and by R. A. Baldwin, District Engineer of Construction, Ontario District, C.N.R., both of whom went over the route to lay out the work for the contractors. The construction will come under Mr. Baldwin, and the Division Engineer of Construction will be Capt. K. G. Polyblank, heretofore Division Engineer, Nipigon Division, Ontario District, C.N.R., Hornepayne, who will