

Local Railway Items from Area Papers - Britannia Power Canal

28/07/1898 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Requesting city for a franchise.

05/08/1898 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Metropolitan Electric bylaw read a first time.

29/08/1898 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

The franchise which the city council has granted to the Metropolitan Electric company was signed yesterday by the mayor.--

13/01/1899 *Ottawa Citizen* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Now in a position to erect their poles - city would like the wires to be strung on Ottawa Electric wires but expect opposition--

The plant of the Metropolitan Company will cost in the neighborhood of \$280,000. It will have a capacity of 3,000 horsepower but only 2,000 of this will be utilized at first. The main power house is to be located at Britannia, where Mr. Thos. Lindsay says he has more power than he knows what to do with. The power cost \$20,000, but he has since been offered \$80,000 for it. There will be a distributing power house on the canal basin where the power, brought in in high voltage, will be reduced.

The power at the Chaudiere has long since all been taken up --More.

08/02/1899 *Ottawa Citizen* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

The supply of power for the Metropolitan company will involve the construction at Britannia of an immense canal costing in the vicinity of \$90,000. Tenders for the work will be received up to the 20th inst. and the contract will be awarded within five days from that date. Work will be commenced immediately and rushed to an early completion, enabling the company to supply light. Heat and power to the residents by the end of August. The canal, which will contain the power for the immense power house just below Britannia, will be one of the largest works constructed in this vicinity for years.

From the head of the Deschenes rapids down to their base there is a fall of the water of over ten feet. The power house will be located near the foot of the rapids and, by putting in the canal with its embankments and dams, the company will be enabled to secure and maintain the water at the same level as it is in Deschenes lake, thus counterbalancing the loss of power caused by the fall in the rapids from their head to the base.

There then follows a detailed description of the canal.

10/02/1899 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Request for tenders from contractors.

24/02/1899 *Ottawa Citizen* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

The Metropolitan Electric company have received fourteen tenders in all for the contract of the construction of the canal at Britannia. Mr. John Aylen, the engineer, is engaged at present examining and comparing the tenders and his report will be forwarded to the directors in the course of a day or two. The directors will then award the contract and the work will be proceeded with at once.

09/03/1899 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Mr. Thomas Lindsay, one of the directors of the Metropolitan Electric Co., has recovered from his recent severe illness. The directors will therefore meet tomorrow afternoon at four o'clock to award the tenders for the new works at Britannia.

21/03/1899 *Ottawa Journal* *Britannia Power Canal* *Britannia*

CONTRACT SIGNED

The Metropolitan Electric Co., yesterday signed contracts with Messrs. Brewder and McNaughton for \$127,000 the cost of the proposed improvements at Britannia. Work will be commenced right away

03/04/1899 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

The work on the Metropolitan Electric Co's power house at Britannia will commence tomorrow morning. Messrs. Brewder and McNaughton, the contractors, have just completed the buildings to house and board 200 men. The buildings comprise a dining hall with a seating capacity of 200, a sleeping house and an ice house, furnished with refrigerators. The company has laid in a large stock of ice. The derricks are being arranged today and about 60 men will be started on the excavations in the morning. By the 18th of the month 300 men must be employed according to the contract. Mr. Patrick Cain, formerly of the Lachine Canal, is in charge of the work for Brewder & McNaughton, while Mr. John Aylen will oversee the work for the Metropolitan Electric company.

03/04/1899 *Ottawa Citizen* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

The Metropolitan Electric company will in a few weeks place an order amounting to \$350,000 for the machinery in the power house to be erected at Britannia. The power house, when completed, will be second to none in Canada and will be thoroughly equipped with the most improved machinery. The plant will include twenty water wheels of 240 horsepower each, four large generators, two small generators and switch boards, regulating machinery and appliances and safety devices.

Work on the foundation of the power house will be commenced immediately and the erection of the superstructure will be started early in the season. The temporary houses which are being erected are well under way and a large ice house for storage purposes has been erected. The work of cutting the canal was commenced today.

Ald. Fripp will move for an extension of the Metropolitan Electric's charter--

04/04/1899 *Ottawa Citizen* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

The village of Britannia is a busy place at present. A large force of mechanics in the employ of Messrs. Brewder & McNaughton, the contractors for the construction of the Metropolitan company's power canal, has been at work for some time putting up buildings to accommodate some 300 men and erecting steam plant to facilitate the construction of the canal. The whole work has to be completed by November 13th and the contractors are laying their plans accordingly and putting on a force and plant that will assure its completion by that date. Considering that they will have to move 114,000 cubic yards of solid rock and 28,000 yards of earth, besides laying a large quantity of masonry and concrete and 1,000,000 feet of timber, the time allotted them is short, and their force will necessarily be large. This contract covers the building of the power canal, the masonry dam to regulate the water in it and the foundation of the power house.

The power house work will be let in a separate contract. The plans and specifications are nearly ready, and tenders will be called for before long. It will be a large and handsome structure 450 feet long.

The poles for the company's power line from Britannia to Ottawa and for its lines in the city, are delivered on the ice on the upper Ottawa, having been got out by Ritchie Bros. of Aylmer, and by Lindsay & McAndrew of Renfrew. The poles will be put down and the wiring of the city commenced as soon as the frost is out of the ground.

More.

05/04/1899 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Messrs. Brewder & McNaughton yesterday turned the first sod for the Metropolitan Electric Co's new works at Britannia. Several derricks are in operation and 60 men are excavation for the foundation of the power house.

15/04/1899 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Work on the Metropolitan Electric Coy's works at Britannia is going ahead rapidly. About 75 men are excavating and over 20 horses hauling out the earth. Mr. John Aylen, the company's engineer is personally supervising the work.

17/04/1899 *Ottawa Citizen* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

The scene of operations at the Metropolitan Electric company's works at Britannia is one of bustle and activity. This morning there were 75 men at work removing the shallow layer of earth which covers the rocks at that place so that the drills and shovels can be operated as soon as they are placed in position. A gang of carpenters are at work constructing the frame for the big steam shovel with which the earth and rock will be thrown out of the trench. The shovel is of extraordinary capacity and will be set on rails so that it can be moved about along the canal in the same manner as a railway track. It will be operated by a steam engine which has already been placed in position and the connecting pipe laid.

Another engine is on the ground and will be set up this week. This one is to operate the steam drills by means of which the rock is to be honeycombed for blasting. The drills are of the most modern type and are very speedy. Besides these, Messrs. Bruder and MacNaughton have a great quantity of hand drills, scrapers, cars and other excavating machinery on hand so that the work will be rushed both day and night as soon as the steam shovel is in place. Tomorrow, about fifty teams will be put on to cart away the earth which will be used for levelling up the grounds and making necessary embankments along the canal.

The contractors have all the timber necessary for the works piled up on the ice of the Upper Ottawa and this will be floated down as soon as the ice has cleared away. The frost is nearly all out of the ground on top of the rock so that the excavating operations are carried on with ease.

There is a miniature village beside the works made up of substantial modern buildings erected for the accommodation of the workmen. There is a blacksmith shop, carpenter shop, cook house and dining room, store and storehouse, icehouse, barn for the horses and an office. The cooking and dining apartments are very comfortable and convenient and will accommodate a night and a day gang of about 300 men each.

The canal itself will be about 3,000 feet long, extending across a point which juts out into the river just opposite the Deschenes rapids. It will be 150 feet wide and about 14 feet deep, and will be principally rock cut.

Mr. P. Kane has charge of the men for Bruder and MacNaughton and Mr. John Aylen is making the surveys and taking the levels.

29/04/1899 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Works at Britannia. The place is now a veritable hive. Full description.

The men and teams are removing rock and are assisted by several steam drills and a steam shovel. A track is being laid, it being the firm's intention to load the rock directly from the excavation to the cars.--

01/05/1899 *Ottawa Citizen* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

A great change has taken place at Britannia. The former scene of restful stillness is now the site of throbbing life and bustle. Work on the Metropolitan Electrical company's canal there is in full swing and the shouts of workmen and the hum of machinery are heard from morn till night. The machinery to be scene [sic] includes a steam shovel and drills. The latter are necessary owing to the large amount of rock cutting and the steam shovel is used to hose(?) the excavated rock out of the cutting.

The buildings for the accommodation of the large staff of workmen and for the supplies form a miniature village. These include a blacksmith shop, where the tools used on the rock are sharpened and scrapers, wagons and picks are repaired, a store and storehouse, and dining and sleeping apartments for the men. Excellent food is prepared under the supervision of Mr. John Lish.

There are three drawings"

- steam shovel and rock drill at work at Britannia.
- workmen's boarding houses erected by the Metropolitan Electric Co.
- steam engine at work operating a rock drill.

(the latter has a locomotive boiler outline with a long stack.)

02/05/1899 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Visit of civic delegation - fully described.

18/05/1899 *Ottawa Citizen* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Operations are being pushed forward on the work of the Metropolitan Electric company at Britannia. About five hundred feet has been excavated so far on the canal but the work has been retarded considerably owing to the depth of water. As soon as it goes down sufficiently the force of men will be greatly increased. The company will shortly put in a big cable for hoisting purposes instead of carting away the earth as at present. The new arrangement will greatly facilitate the work.

30/06/1899 *Ottawa Citizen* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Further description of the work of Brewder and McNaughton which was just completing a railway contract in Port Arthur.

--As part of the channel has been blasted the required depth, 10 feet, the steam derrick has been moved to another section, where, along with two similar derricks, the immense slabs of rock will be loaded on to train cars and hauled away.

Hauling the Rock

A second track is being laid, and when this is completed, there will be nearly two miles of track on which to haul the rock from the field of operations to the different embankments. There are already 28 cars in use, and as they can each carry 30 cubic feet of stone, it can be seen that the work can be proceeded with much better than when only horse carts are in use.

22/07/1899 *Ottawa Free Press* *Britannia Power Canal* *Metropolitan Electric*

Messrs. Brewder and McNaughton, the contractors, are making rapid progress with the power stream of the Metropolitan Electric Co. at Britannia. Most of the Deschenes mill men are employed and the rock is being taken out rapidly. The crib work will be commenced next week. The timber for the work is already on the ground.

THE METROPOLITAN ELECTRIC CO'S CANAL

A Largo Sized. Cut Through the Rock. The Machinery and Labor Employed.

The harsh clank of the derrick chains and the sharp hiss of escaping steam from the engines, mingle not unpleasantly with the boom of the Britannia rapids. The work of the Metropolitan Electric Company at the village by the lake goes merrily along, and there is no apparent decrease of activity or curtailment of extent.

The work is certainly an immense undertaking. On first viewing it the beholder sees a confusion of railway tracks, men, engines, pumps, steam drills and tons upon tons of solid rock, Yet on a little observation this confusion resolves itself into a concentrated and determined effort to overcome nature's difficulties.

The whole work is to dig a canal out of the living rock, over a quarter of a mile long, one hundred and fifty feet wide at the narrowest part, and with a depth of fourteen feet and over. Yet to do this will necessitate the removal of one hundred thousand cubic yards of solid rock and piling it up along the sides of the cutting. No light, task this, even for the meet modern methods of the nineteenth century.

As to the Canal

This canal runs parallel to the rapids and with but a few feet of rock between the two. The work at present being done is at the lower end of the cutting. One hundred and fifty men are employed, two pumps are kept going incessantly, two large steam derricks are used and two powerful steam drills keep pounding holes for the dynamite constantly.

Along each edge of the excavation runs lines of track. The two big steam derricks hoist loads of rock up from the cutting into one of the half dozen cars or so on the tracks. When loaded these run partly by gravity as the track slopes down hill, partly by horse-power and partly by steam cable between the rails.

The derricks with their engines are placed upon tracks which they move along as the work advances. The derricks are of the most modern kind, and a load can be lifted and put into a car, the return journey made by the derrick and another load attached ready for lifting, all within the sixty seconds.

All around there are hundreds of tons of rock lying. This has been piled as a rule along the edge of the cutting. The rock breaks off in thin wide ledges usually not more than a couple of inches thick.

Keeping Water Out.

The nearness of the rapids and the cracks in the rocks makes it necessary for two steam pumps to be kept going night and day to keep the canal dry. The system of pumping is simple. Two wells are dug in the lowest part of the canal, and into these the surplus water is run. It is then pumped out and reaches the rapids through wooden troughs. Each of the pumps has its separate engine.

There are one hundred and fifty men employed. When they are working altogether it presents a busy scene. The Journal representative stood in one place and counted one hundred men all within a very narrow radius. There are blacksmiths, engineers and firemen, foremen, carters, drill men and laborers. The laborers, of course, form the great majority and are English, French and Italian, with a preponderance of the latter nationality. These laborers get paid \$1.25 each day for work from 7 a. m. till 6 p.m., and seem to be content.

Contractors Brewder and McNaughton stay on the work most of the time to supervise. They are busy men. The men live in a camp, built by the company. They are quiet and do not in the least disturb the peace of the pretty village by the lake. The men say they are well treated by their contractors, and in all, the work seems to be conducted on a first-class basis.

16/09/1899 *Ottawa Journal**Britannia Power Canal**Britannia*

STRIKE AT BRITANNIA

There is a strike on among the 150 men employed on the Metropolitan Electric Company's work at Britannia. These men have not yet received last month's pay, and on this account they quit work at noon yesterday. They say they will not again start until their money is forthcoming. A deputation of the laborers waited on President T. Lindsay, of the Metropolitan Company yesterday, and asked for their wages, but they claim the money was not forthcoming. They were not satisfied with Mr. Lindsay's promises that the back wages would soon be paid. Up to noon to-day there was not much likelihood of the men returning to work.

16/09/1899 *Ottawa Citizen**Britannia Power Canal**Metropolitan Electric*

The men employed on the Metropolitan company's works at Britannia quit work yesterday at one o'clock, and a deputation waited upon President Lindsay in reference to securing last month's wages, owing to them by Messrs. Brewder and McNaughton, the contractors who gave up the work last week. The deputation claimed that, as the company had taken over the work, and was going to complete it, the company should pay the men for the work done. President Lindsay assured the men that the money was lying in the bank to pay the back wages, but in order to protect itself the company would not be able to pay until the company had obtained the necessary order from the court, there being a number of liens on the money held back by the company. He pointed out besides that the company had not the proper pay sheets in its possession. This assurance was thoroughly satisfactory to the deputation, and work will be resumed without any delay.

The company has increased considerably the force since taking over the work, and hopes soon to have over 500 men at work in order to furnish light and power before the end of the year.

With this end in view President Lindsay has given an order to Messrs. Chitty & Co., of Montreal, to secure 200 extra men. There are about 250 now employed. The wages being paid is \$1.40 per day to laborers and \$1.65 to river men. It has been found impossible to find enough laborers in Ottawa, hence the appeal to those resident in another city.

18/09/1899 *Ottawa Citizen**Britannia Power Canal**Metropolitan Electric*

There is now no strike at Britannia, so far as the Metropolitan company is concerned. Messrs. Wanless and MacMillan were engaged in paying off all the men who were under employment up to Friday at noon. The company will now commence with a clean sheet - those who like to work will be given employment, those who are dissatisfied will be ordered away from the scene of operations entirely.

One hundred and seventy-five men in all were paid this morning. As they filed through the office they were each of them asked if they would work. Some of them said they would, while the majority maintained that their course would be governed entirely by the action of their comrades. Conversation with the men by a reporter disclosed the fact that not a few of them had any idea of the proposition made by the company. President Lindsay drove out to the works this afternoon, so that it is not unlikely that many of the misconceptions that exist will be obliterated.

New Men at Work

About half past one o'clock this afternoon Engineer Aylen started a few men and horses to work. The former strikers stood on a mound of stone to the south. They offered no interference. "Let them fire away for the afternoon," said one of the loiterers; "it can do no harm." This observation would seem to indicate that the truce is only for the time being, and there is consequently no telling what may happen when the company undertake to replace the men.

Engineer Aylen asserted that he feared no trouble, and that he would have 75 men at work during the progress of the afternoon. It is unlikely, however, that he will have so large a percentage. The great majority of the men were very positive upon the point that they would not work until the back pay was given them.

All morning close upon 200 men were in the vicinity of the office. They stood about in little knots of twos and threes and chatted over the situation. Some of the more sportive amused themselves by shying stones at a glass bottle, evidently in anticipation of the human objects they will have as targets later on. But the company's officials will take every precaution against harm coming to those under their employment.

Strikers almost cause riot in Britannia

Journal may be sued

Metropolitan Company will serve a notice of suit for libel

A riot was narrowly averted at the works of the Metropolitan Electrical company at Britannia Saturday morning. The cause of the trouble was an attempt on the part of the company to put on 75 additional men. The strikers seeing this move became defiant and threatened to stone the newcomers. So dangerous did the situation appear to be that the company in order to avoid trouble withdrew the new men. These men it is claimed, were not put on to replace the strikers but to hurry up the work.

The strikers have engaged Mr. L.S. Smith as their solicitor.

This morning the company will again endeavor to put new men to work and if any interference is made on the part of the strikers, the county constabulary will be called upon to maintain order. The company is willing to let any men of Brewder and McNaughton's gang go to work this morning if they desire to do so.

A libel suit

Mr. Thos Lindsay President of the Metropolitan Electric company will this morning, on behalf of the company have a suit for libel served upon the Evening Journal. The alleged libel consists of certain allegations made in the Journal on Saturday to the effect that the men went on strike because the company owed them a month's wages. The company claims that it is Brewder and McNaughton, the contractors who owe the men.

Mr. Lindsay in the following letter gives the company's side of the case

Ottawa Sept 18th 1899

Editor Citizen.- In view of the false statements and misrepresentations that appeared in the Evening Journal of Saturday regarding the strike on the works of the Metropolitan company at Britannia, for which the Journal will have to answer in the courts, I claim the privilege of publicly stating the facts of the case in your columns:-

1st. Owing to the contractors, Messrs. Brewder and McNaughton not pushing these works with proper despatch, the company took over said works and the plant of the contractors under the terms of the contract, on the 7th of September.

2nd. The company therefore on Saturday last owed the men employed by it one week's pay, which it is paying at once, though by its engagement the company is only under obligation to pay every two weeks

3rd. The net regulating workmen's liens required the company to retain fifteen per cent of all money earned by the contractors to protect workmen - and such fifteen per cent has been duly retained and it is believed the same is sufficient to pay the workmen thirty day's wages, and should it not prove sufficient the company has a fund that it will make good the difference.

4th. The workmen made affidavits as to the amounts due them by the contractors, but Mr. Brewder, of the firm of Brewder & McNaughton, notified Mr. A.?? The Vice President of the company, not to pay the men on their affidavits as they were not correct.

5th. Messrs Brewder and McNaughton have refused to deliver to the company, or to the solicitor employed by the workmen, the pay sheets, or copies of the same, for the last thirty days the men worked for them, to the end that the men might be paid at once.

6th. The law allows thirty days' notice in which to register liens on said fifteen per cent., and consequently the company could not, with any regard to its own interests, pay out this fifteen per cent, before the expiration of thirty days.

7th. To prevent the hardship that this delay of thirty days would occasion the workmen, I offered, and I still offer to advance sufficient of my own money to purchase at par the claims of the men for wages for said thirty days and if the pay sheets had been furnished by the contractors and said claims duly recorded the workmen would have in this manner, been paid by now and they can secure payment as soon as these formalities have been complied with.

In view of these facts the public will appreciate the motives of the Journal in persistently slandering the Metropolitan company and misrepresenting its affairs. Yours faithfully T. Lindsay, President Metropolitan Electric Company.

19/09/1899 *Ottawa Free Press*

Britannia Power Canal

Metropolitan Electric

Six special constables filed up at the Metropolitan works at Britannia this morning. They were there to prevent any interference on the part of the striking workmen, but there was no disturbance whatsoever. The men who wished to return to work did so without any attempt being made to interfere to molest them. Nearly all returned to work, in addition to thirty-five extra. All is quiet today.

A large number of men were paid yesterday and almost all of these were among those taken on today. More.

19/09/1899 *Ottawa Citizen*

Britannia Power Canal

Metropolitan Electric

The strike at Britannia is now practically settled and work on the Metropolitan company's canal there was recommenced this morning. One hundred and fifty of the old men were re-engaged, and 35 new men in addition were given employment. About 15 are still disaffected.

President Lindsay has himself individually undertaken to purchase 50 per cent of every claim, or he will pay 100 per cent on every claim for which a lien has been registered. About 80 per cent of the old men have sworn out liens. So that President Lindsay's proposal cannot but be viewed as exceedingly fair.

Magistrate Smith, of Carleton county, is acting on behalf of the ex-strikers, and he had it arranged that men would go to work yesterday morning. They would have done so, it is said, had it not been for the interference of one Doyle, who has been a prominent ring leader among the men who caused the trouble.

20/09/1899 *Ottawa Citizen*

Britannia Power Canal

Metropolitan Electric

All is quiet at the Britannia works of the Metropolitan company; 175 men are under employment. A special trainload of men from Montreal passed through the city to Britannia this afternoon; there were 150 laborers on board.

All the men who had liens on Messrs. Bruder and McNaughton's funds, were paid up in full by President Lindsay personally last night. It took until 12.30 a.m. to dispose of the last applicant. Others who have claims will swear out liens today, and those, which will doubtless include all who are personally disaffected, will be paid off tonight.

22/09/1899 *Almonte Gazette*

Britannia Power Canal

Metropolitan Electric

The strikers at Britannia almost caused a riot last Saturday. The Metropolitan Company threatens to sue the Ottawa Journal for libel for saying that company owes the men back pay. It is the contractors, they say, who are in arrears, and not the company.

16/10/1899 *Ottawa Free Press*

Britannia Power Canal

Metropolitan Electric

Work on the construction of the Metropolitan company's establishment at Britannia is going ahead at a good rate. Mr. Thomas Lindsay, the president, informed the Free Press today that three car loads more of machinery were on their way from the west for the works.

CRUSHED BY AN ENGINE

Thomas Whiteley Seriously Injured at Britannia--May Lose a Leg.

Thomas Whiteley, an employe of the Metropolitan Electric company, was seriously hurt at the Britannia construction works this morning. The unfortunate man whose place it was to look after a small shunting engine was between the engine and a large pile of wood standing near the track. In the jam Whiteley's right leg was badly crushed below the knee and the flesh almost torn away from it. He received several severe bruises about the body and suffered intensely. Dr. Smith, of Hintonburg, who was summoned, dressed the man's wounds, afterwards having him removed to the Protestant hospital. It is not known yet whether the leg will have to be amputated or not. Whiteley, who is a married man about 40 years of age, lives at 531 Albert street. He had only been engaged on his present job about two weeks when he met with the accident. Whiteley will be laid up for several weeks.

29/11/1899 *Ottawa Journal**Britannia Power Canal**Metropolitan Electric*

Ten Engines at Work - But the Rock Cutting on the Metropolitan Canal is Slow Work

Ten engines are at work in different parts of the Metropolitan Electric Co.'s work at Britannia and a couple of rigs are required all the time to draw coal for operating the engines.

About two hundred men are at work and the rock cut in the canal is a little more than half finished. There is still a great amount of cutting to do and the work is so large that the progress seems slow. A Britannia resident who has been watching the progress of the work during the winter says that the balance of the cutting cannot be finished this winter.

03/05/1900 *Ottawa Free Press**Britannia Power Canal**Metropolitan Electric*

The Metropolitan Electric company have some 110 men working at Britannia. The water is high and some temporary dams have been built, to keep it from falling into the pit. Rock cutting is the principal work being carried on at present. A locomotive and fifteen cars are drawing stone to rip-rap the embankment. Three steam drills are also at work. The crib work is being pushed ahead rapidly.

05/06/1900 *Ottawa Citizen**Britannia Power Canal**Metropolitan Electric*

The Metropolitan company is having a survey made for the purpose of aiding it to put up a fence around its 60 acres of park land adjacent to the works. The president, Mr. T. Lindsay, visits the works almost daily and many other Ottawans also visit the scene of the company's present operations and are interested by the magnitude of the task that has been undertaken. The rock is being taken out rapidly and as soon as the water in the river goes down a large staff of workmen will commence to erect the power house. This work will therefore likely begin in about two weeks.

19/06/1900 *Ottawa Citizen**Britannia Power Canal**Metropolitan Electric*

At least seven-eighths of the work on the Metropolitan company's undertaking has been already completed. Over 100,000 cubic yards of stone have been taken out of the cut, and there remains about 45,000 cubic yards to be still removed. On the present payroll are 174 men, and in two weeks' time 500 more will be engaged in the work of constructing the power house. The entire work will be completed in about three months. The stone that has been blasted to make a channel has been used to construct an embankment that is 53 feet high. Its length is about 600 feet now, and it will be considerably extended. The most expensive part of the work that has yet been performed was the construction of the crib work in the river. It was very difficult to get the structure bolted securely to the solid rock. This difficult task was finally accomplished, and the result has been most satisfactory. The crib is about 2,500 feet in length.

The work has been retarded by high water. The lower end of the cut is flooded, but a ridge was left in the center, and the place where the men are now excavating is quite free from moisture. Three very heavy blasts take place daily. By each at least 200 cubic yards of rock are loosened. Each charge contains 20 pounds of dynamite and it is necessary to place this in position to drill 18 feet into the solid rock. Three hundred carloads of the shattered rock are taken by the company's little railway system to the end of the embankment. The coffer-dam has been finished.

Engineer Aylen has recovered from a very severe illness and has resumed control of the operations. There is accommodation at the works for 400 men and all the staff will be housed there. Thirty horses are kept busy at miscellaneous work. A fence is to be built along Main street from the C.P.R. station to the works.

19/07/1900 *Ottawa Citizen**Britannia Power Canal**Metropolitan Electric*

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Three hundred car loads are taken by the company's little railway system to the end of the embankment.--

IT IS PRAISED

Engineers Well Pleased With the Work.

THE METROPOLITAN CO.

Promises to Develop Abundant and Cheap Power Uninterruptedly.

The Canadian Engineering Association were yesterday afforded an opportunity of visiting and inspecting the works of the Metropolitan Electric company at Britannia, which will shortly be in a position to supply electric light and power at a very cheap rate to the citizens and manufacturing industries of Ottawa.

The large canal which has been cut out from the solid rock is completed with the exception of one hundred feet and to finish it about six week's work will be necessary.

At the end of the canal will be situated the large powerhouse, the construction of which will be commenced next week. There is a natural foundation of solid rock upon which the structure will rest. The Metropolitan company has already expended over \$115,000 on the work, but will spare no expense to see that the available power is fully developed in the most improved manner.

To the body of engineers accustomed to works of such magnitude the Metropolitan company's premises afforded a great deal of interest yesterday afternoon, and the manner in which operations are being carried out not only elicited much favorable comment, but it was agreed that the company possesses a magnificent power, which, when developed, as is being done, should enable it to supply electric current at a most advantageous rate and incidentally do much to encourage the location of industries in the capital city.

The opinion of some of the experienced and most learned engineers of Canada and the United States on the subject, as given to the Citizen yesterday, will be of great interest to Ottawans, whose electric problem has long been one and engrossing a great deal of attention.

EXPERT OPINION.

Prof. Bovey, dean of the faculty of civil engineering in McGill university, after looking over the Metropolitan Electric company's works, expressed himself as highly pleased. He said that with the fall and the abundant head of water, the property admitted of great development and should supply an immense power. With the large area of quiet water which would be afforded by the canal in course of construction, Prof. Bovey said there should be no difficulty from anchor ice or no possible diminution of the power from that cause. The company was proceeding with the work in a manner that was eminently satisfactory from an engineering standpoint, and the facilities at its command should be able to supply power at a rate that would do much to induce industries to locate in Ottawa, if the present conditions did not permit of such.

Mr. E. P. Hannaford, for 38 years chief engineer of the Grand Trunk Railway system, regarded the Metropolitan company's property and power as one of the finest he had seen. With its eleven feet of fall it should admit of much development of electrical power. The immense power derived from the Lachine rapids, Mr. Hannaford said, emanated from a fall of only 13 feet and this spoke much for the possibilities of the local company. The water surrounding, not admitting of disturbance, should give no trouble from anchor ice.

Mr. Robert Forsyth, a well-known Montreal civil engineer, manufacturer and paving contractor, who was with Mr. Hannaford, coincided with his statements.

Mr. George Brush, mechanical engineer of Montreal, said that there was a great opportunity to develop power at Britannia, and the Metropolitan company were going about it in the right way. With an unlimited supply of water, furnishing great power, and with a tail race wholly unobstructed, the works were finely situated and should develop a power in a quantity that ought to make it very cheap for domestic use and more particularly for manufacturing purposes. The lake above, freezing over, Mr. Brush stated, there should be no possibility of anchor ice, which in previous years has much interfered with companies drawing power from other sources in Ottawa.

STILL OTHER VIEWS

Mr. Roderick MacColl, assistant provincial engineer of Nova Scotia - "I regard the Metropolitan company's power as admitting of great development and capable of supplying electrical power in such a volume and with such facility as should cheapen its cost immensely."

Mr. E. H. Keating, ex-city engineer of Toronto, and now manager of the Toronto railway, spoke of the industry as a fine piece of engineering work which should produce much power.

Mr. G. A. Mountain, chief engineer of the Canada Atlantic Railway system, said the Metropolitan company possessed one of the finest powers in this district, which was saying a great deal. The company possessed a great head of water and its full strength should be developed by the means which the company was now employing. There should be no difficulty in generating 5,000 or 6,000 horsepower from the canal now underway, and he saw no possibility of anchor ice under the existing conditions.

Lt. -Col. W. P. Anderson, chief engineer of the marine and fisheries department said that he had not looked carefully over the works, but with the fall of over ten feet it should be easy to secure a great deal of power. He could state positively, however that there was not the remotest chance for anchor ice to gather at the works.

FOR MANUFACTURE

Speaking of the Metropolitan power project, Mr. C. Da B. Leprobon, assistant city engineer of Montreal, said: "It should prove of incalculable value to the city for manufacturing purposes. From what I have seen I am satisfied as to its feasibility. The distance of transmission of power is short, which is a great advantage. There should be no trouble from anchor ice, as there is no current or rapid at the head, and there is also calm water in the tail race." Speaking about the work at Lachine, this gentleman stated that a channel one and a half miles long had to be built to overcome the difficulty and occasioned by the presence of anchor ice at the head. Hence the Metropolitan company's advantage in this important respect could be scarcely estimated. Mr. Leprobon expressed himself as satisfied with the manner in which the construction work was being carried forward.

Discussing the work and prospects of the Metropolitan Co., Prof. C. H. McLeod, of the engineering staff of McGill university, Montreal, said:

"There is a splendid natural power, easily developed, and, as far as I can see, the right steps are being taken to develop it. I was pleased at the progress being made. The completion of the works will supply cheap power and prove a boon to Ottawa as a manufacturing center."

Mr. Wm. Kennedy, the well-known civil engineer, of Montreal, expressed himself as being very favorably impressed with the nature and progress of the Metropolitan company's work. "There should not be much trouble with anchor ice, and plenty of cheap power would be easily transmitted to the city."

"There is certainly a big lot of cheap power at the Metropolitan works," Mr. H. A. Gautier, civil engineer of the Phoenix Bridge works, Montreal, when questioned on the matter. "There is a heavy head of water, which should be free from anchor ice. The power can be easily transmitted and supplied cheaply to the city." with this opinion O. Arcaud, of the same company, agreed.

The difficulty from anchor ice is one which according to Mr. C. H. Mitchell, civil engineer of Niagara Falls, Ont., the Metropolitan company's promoters and engineers will have no occasion to contend with. The fact that there was a large body of calm water, this authority contended, was sufficient reason for the prevention of the formation of anchor ice. "Success in a project of this nature depends on the presence of a good supply of water and a good fall of water. Both of these are present at the Metropolitan company's works, and, coupled with easy transmission, should mean the production of cheap and abundant power, and in turn establish Ottawa as a manufacturing center. Ottawa is certainly a great center for water power," concluded Mr Mitchell, "and the Metropolitan plant should prove a great factor in the progress of the city." Mr Mitchell is engaged in a similar project at Niagara Falls and is also interested in the development of water power on the Severn river. The power in the latter case is to be transmitted to the town of Orillia, over 20 miles distant. The fact that the power from the Metropolitan works has only to be transmitted a distance of six miles is, in Mr. Mitchell's opinion, a strong point in favor of the power scheme.

A GREAT WORK

"It is certainly a great work and should prove of much value and importance to the city in the development of its manufacturing interests," stated

Mr. F.X. Berlinguel, of Quebec, one of the engineers who visited the Metropolitan company's works, "I anticipate no trouble with anchor ice," he continued. "I see that the works have been designed and built with the object of providing an equally large power winter and summer. The nature of the body of water and the plan adopted in cutting the channel wide and deep should forestall the trouble with anchor ice experienced at other power plants during our Canadian winter." Mr. Berlinguel expressed himself as satisfied with the progress and plans of the works.

Freedom from trouble with anchor ice was also in the opinion of Mr. F. W. Lesage, civil engineer of Montreal, "one of the great advantages enjoyed by the Metropolitan company at its Britannia power plant. There is a body of dead water, free from currents and rapids, and on this the ice lies solid the whole winter, hence the formation of anchor ice is an impossibility." In this respect the power property differs from those at Lachine and other points," continued Mr Lesage. This gentleman has great faith in the future of Ottawa as a Manufacturing center. "Even in the last three years there has been great growth here," he continued, "and, possessing such splendid water power as it does, the city should advance rapidly." One factor in this advancement will be, according to Mr. Lesage, the close proximity of the Metropolitan power plant.

"With the necessary capital, there is no reason why the Metropolitan power scheme should not prove successful in its completion," stated Mr. F. Miller, civil engineer, Napanee. "There is plenty of power, which can be produced cheaply and easily transmitted, and I see no reason why the manufacturing interests of the city should not boom as a consequence."

Mr. E. St. J. Maunsell, civil engineer of Nelson, B.C., referred to the Metropolitan work as being a "splendid enterprise." "There is a good head of water," he continued, "free from anchor ice, and cheap power can be produced the year-round." Mr. Maunsell agreed with the other engineers that the plant would be of immense value to Ottawa.

Mr. Owen O'Sullivan, civil engineer, of Quebec, expressed himself as being satisfied that the work undertaken by the Metropolitan power company could and would be carried to a successful completion. He expressed his surprise at the amount of work done, and agreed that the company was working along the right lines to produce cheap power and plenty of it the year round.

Mr. Henry O'Sullivan, of Quebec stated that, while the Metropolitan works were not as yet completed, he felt satisfied that their proximity to the city would prove of great advantage to it and its business and manufacturing interests. He saw no reason why cheap power should not be produced and easily transmitted.

Mr. E. A. Evans was another civil engineer from the Ancient Capital who expressed his approval of the work carried on by the Metropolitan Power Co., and prophesied a boom for Ottawa's manufacturing interest on the completion of the power plant.

25/09/1900 **Ottawa Citizen** **Britannia Power Canal** **Metropolitan Electric**

Only 80 feet of earth remain to be excavated before the Metropolitan Electric company completes its canal at Britannia. The canal is 150 feet wide and has a depth of 12 feet. A staff of 90 men is now employed under the superintendence of Ald. Hewlett. Operations will be started next week on the big power house of the company which is to be 500 feet long and 250 feet wide. It will be two stories in height and constructed of concrete.

04/10/1900 **Ottawa Free Press** **Britannia Power Canal** **Metropolitan Electric**

Mr. McCallum of the Public Works department, made an examination of the power works and water lots at Britannia. He finds that everything there is as it should be.

23/10/1900 **Ottawa Free Press** **Britannia Power Canal** **Metropolitan Electric**

Ald Hewlett, superintendent of the Metropolitan company's work at Britannia, reports that the company has about eighty men at work. Considerable difficulty has been experienced in obtaining labor. There is about fifty feet of canal to be excavated yet before the place where the cut-in for the bulk head is reached. The new power house will be pushed ahead this fall if the frost does not interfere with the concrete work.

23/11/1900 **Ottawa Citizen** **Britannia Power Canal** **Metropolitan Electric**

The Metropolitan Electric Company has completed its canal to within a few feet of the river. It will be necessary to do some excavating near the point where the river water enters the canal from which the power will be derived.

In order that the work on the power house may be carried on conveniently during the winter a temporary shed will be erected over the site.

Arrangements are now being made to secure the necessary machinery, but it will probably be spring before the work is completed and the plant installed so as to enable the company to avail itself of its franchise and supply light, heat and power to the city.

29/11/1900 **Ottawa Journal** **Britannia Power Canal** **Britannia**

THE METROPOLITAN WORKS

Ald. Hewlett, who is a foreman at the works of the Metropolitan Electric Co. at Britannia said last evening that the work of rock cutting on the canal construction would be finished in another six weeks. There still remains to be excavated a cut 70 feet long 14 feet deep and 150 feet wide. About sixty men are employed on the works. Regarding the building of the power house Mr. Hewlett says that the construction work will be commenced as soon as a spur line can be put in by the C.P.R. This line is required to carry material to the site for the power house.

28/12/1900 **Ottawa Free Press** **Britannia Power Canal** **Metropolitan Electric**

Ald. Hewlett, superintendent of the Metropolitan Electric company's works at Britannia says about forty men are constantly employed there. The building of the southern embankment has just been completed and the excavation of the remaining portion of the canal is now going on. Thirty-five feet more of rock has to be taken out before the canal is finished.

04/03/1901 **Ottawa Citizen** **Britannia Power Canal** **Metropolitan Electric**

Mr. C. Jenkins, the well known Petrolia oil man, and vice-president of the Metropolitan Electric company of Ottawa, is in the city and on Saturday accompanied President Thomas Lindsay to Britannia to inspect the work. Mr. Jenkins was highly pleased with the progress of the work, and is very sanguine as to the company's future. The existence of such a water power so close to Ottawa is an invaluable asset to the city and he thought it would be an invaluable factor in attracting new industries here. While not a civil engineer, he believed there is about twenty thousand horse power, outside of what the company is now developing, and as the city demands it the additional power can be developed. The existence of the power so close to Ottawa is bound to make the Capital prominent as a manufacturing city.

Mr. Jenkins stated that the erection of the power house is practically all there is to be done as the canal is almost finished. The company is now considering the purchase of the machinery for the power house, the tenders being all in. The machinery will cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000, and as it will be of the most modern type, and there will be no trouble with anchor ice, electric light of the highest quality will soon be a cheap commodity in Ottawa.

28/08/1901 **Ottawa Citizen** **Britannia Power Canal** **Metropolitan Electric**

The creditors of Brewder and McNaughton held a meeting in Code and Burritt's office yesterday afternoon. Mr. Cole was confirmed as assignee and Messrs. Thomas Birkett and W.H. McAuliffe were appointed inspectors of the estate. An adjournment was given for a few days to give the Inspectors time to prepare a report. The assets are about \$19,000, consisting principally of the plant established by Brewder and McNaughton at Britannia in connection with the Metropolitan Power Company's works. This plant is valued at about \$17,000. The liabilities are about \$9,000.

Two or three old derricks slowly falling to complete ruin, stretches of rusty tracks, broken dump cars alongside a 1,000 foot channel skirting the Deschenes Rapids at Britannia are all the evidence today of a fortune the Metropolitan Electric Company put into a scheme via which Ottawa was to be supplied with cheap light and power.

Some day the work may be resumed --

--plan was to cut a channel alongside the Deschenes Rapids, turn the water from Lake Deschenes into the channel, build a dam at the end where it ran into the Ottawa River, install the necessary harness, develop power and transmit it to the city and the factories which it was thought would locate on the large site of over 100 acres which the company own adjacent to the dam

Work started in the spring of 1898-- Brewder and MacNaughton were given the contract --work was continued in 1899 and early in 1900. Money scarce and closed down in 1900.