

Willis  
**St. Louis Hotel.**

The Russell Hotel Company, Proprietors.

WILLIS RUSSELL, President.

Quebec, Sept. 29 1877

9.45 A.M.

My dear Father,

I find that all the Harbour improvement here are being carried out by a firm of Engineers in London, Kinnipple & Morris. Appointments are made by the Commissioners here but have to be approved by them. The candidates for the place of Assistant now filled were almost all rejected by them, although some of them were friends of members of the Board.

The Resident Engineer is a Mr. Pilkington of England. Boswell introduced me to him & he spoke very frankly to me. He said that he & Boswell had quite as much as they could do at present, & were even behind-hand with some parts of the work; but as winter was coming on

he did not wish to ask for any assistance at present. The work now in hand is the construction of a long pier on the S<sup>E</sup> Charles side of Quebec to form a tidal harbour, the entrance being from the S<sup>E</sup> Lawrence, & the further end of the pier being connected with the shore so that the Railway may be brought out on to it. In the Spring the Graving Dock will be commenced. Contracts to be made about January, & some preliminary ~~blasting~~ blasting to be done during the Winter. In Spring ~~more~~ a larger staff will be required as the graving Dock is at Point Lewis. It is to be of Granite & will be a very nice piece of work.

M<sup>r</sup> Pilkington says that he could not consent to any one being placed above Boswell, but that he ought to have the choice of the work here or at Point Lewis. I suppose however that we would be on an equality. The pay at present is £ 500 (sterling) to the Resident Engineer who is a person of about 40 & has had considerable experience; and \$ 300 a year to Boswell whom M<sup>r</sup> Pilkington graciously admitted to be "underpaid." I told him I could not accept the



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position unless he could offer me a reasonable amount, but I think the place worth applying for as the work will be very interesting, & of course I am under no obligation to accept. He advised me not to see the London firm at present, as if they heard that more help was needed, they would probably send some of their own men, & that I would have less chance than by applying to the Commissioners first; but he thought I would do well to see them in Spring. Mr. Pilkington knows the Ports et Chauxées & from what I could gather ~~planned~~ would be very well satisfied to have me on the work.

I saw the Secretary who gave me much the same information as I now write in regard to prospects of an opening. I also called upon the Commissioners now in town.

I had not much chance of copying drawings, but Lewis got some very interesting notes, & saw models of work.

Fine morning. Bus leaves Hotel at 8-30 & Tender leaves at 9 o. There is every prospect of a pleasant sail down the river this morning.

Yours affectionately

William.

P.S. Should apply about Jan 2 writing to the Engineer & Commissioners at same time, as it seems the Pres: Engineer makes suggestions to the board.