

Saskatchewan History

VOLUME XXII,
No. 3, — AUTUMN, 1969

50c



Saskatchewan History

Vol. XXII

Autumn, 1969

Number 3

Contents

LORD MELGUND AND THE NORTH-WEST CAMPAIGN	Carman Miller	81
DOCUMENTS OF WESTERN HISTORY:		
THE JOURNAL OF ELEANOR SHEPPHARD MATHESON, 1920. PART II EDITED BY RUTH MATHESON BUCK		109
BOOK REVIEWS:		
McCourt, <i>Saskatchewan</i> : by J. A. Wedgwood		118
Southesk, <i>Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains</i> : by R. M. Buck		120
NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE		120

COVER BY CECIL B. STAIGH



Editor: D. H. BOCKING

Advisory Board

A. R. TURNER (*ex officio*), L. C. PAUL, M. K. BAKER, P. TARNOWSKY

Business Manager: L. W. RODWELL

Correspondence should be addressed to: *Saskatchewan History*,
Saskatchewan Archives Office, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Published three times a year under the auspices of the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

Yearly subscriptions, \$1.50; special 3-year rate, \$4.00;
Bulk order of 10 or more, \$1.00 per subscription (1 year)

The Advisory Board and the Saskatchewan Archives Board assume no responsibility
for statements made by contributors.

Copyright 1969

THE SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES BOARD

Lord Melgund and the North-West Campaign of 1885¹

To the student of the 1885 Riel Rebellion, Lord Melgund's diary account of his "North West Campaign" is an authoritative and useful historical document.² As Major-General F. D. Middleton's Chief of Staff, brother imperial officer, and friend, Lord Melgund possessed the confidence of the campaign's Commanding Officer. And, as the military secretary to Governor-General Lansdowne, he had an intimate knowledge of Canadian federal politics and politicians. Although weak on political commentary, Melgund's diary contains a detailed description of the campaign's logistics, and daily manoeuvres, written from the vantage of the General Officer Commanding's camp.

Born in 1845, Lord Melgund, heir to the Minto Earldom, was educated at Eton and Cambridge. A poor scholar, scornful of politics, Melgund was more interested in sports and soldiers. In 1867, after graduating from Cambridge, he spent three years in the Scots Fusilier Guards, before beginning a six year racing career, as "Mr. Rolly", the gentleman jockey. A severe fall, parental pressure and a sense of frustrated ambition ended his only moderately successful racing career in 1876. For the next seven years Melgund served as an occasional, free lance, military adventurer in Turkey, Afghanistan, South Africa and Egypt.

In none of these campaigns was Melgund's military contribution large or impressive. His outspoken criticism of politicians during these years, and his impatience with democratic institutions reflected the opinions of the professional soldiers with whom he associated in Britain and the outposts of Empire. For Lord Melgund considered himself primarily a soldier. Yet, without serious military experience, his promotional opportunities were limited, in spite of his close personal friendship with Britain's rival Generals, Garnet Wolseley, and Frederick Roberts.

It is against this background of frustrated military ambition, and anticipated promotion, that Melgund accepted the recently appointed Canadian Governor-General Lord Lansdowne's invitation to go to Ottawa as viceregal military secretary. The record of Melgund's brief (1883-1885) but creditable Canadian career paved the way to his later appointment as Governor-General of Canada in 1898. Apart from his routine duties as military secretary, Melgund's successful performance of three important, extraordinary tasks, earned him the reputation of an industrious, competent administrator, possessing tact and judgement.

Melgund's first special service opportunity came in August, 1884, less than a year after his arrival in Canada.³ In that month the British Government, under public pressure, decided to despatch a relief expedition, under Sir Garnet

¹I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the French Canada Studies Programme, McGill University, in defraying the expense of preparing this manuscript for publication. In particular, I wish to thank Mlle. M. Sequin for typing the manuscript.

²This diary is found in the *Minto Papers*, Public Archives of Canada, microfilm reel (A129).

³For a detailed account of the Nile Voyagers, see C. P. Stacey, *Records of the Nile Voyagers 1884-1885*, (Toronto, 1959).

Wolseley's command, to rescue General Charles George Gordon, besieged at Khartoum, by Madi forces. To transport the necessary troops and supplies up the Nile, Wolseley requested a contingent of Canadian Indians and boatmen, such as he used during the Red River Expedition of 1870. Lansdowne delegated the task of recruiting, equipping and transporting the contingent of 373 voyageurs to his military secretary, Lord Melgund. Carefully advised by Lansdowne, and closely assisted by lumbermen J. T. Lambert, and P. Rice, Melgund impressed Canadian politicians by his skillful handling of the inevitable problems, of region, race and religion.

Melgund had scarcely despatched the Nile voyageur contingent, when the Canadian Government appointed him to a Defence Committee of four (later five) to examine Canadian Coastal Defence. In this Committee the burden of work fell upon Melgund, and the Committee's very competent secretary, Colin Campbell. Together they sifted, selected and solicited relevant information and suggestions to improve Canada's contribution to the better defence of its coastal flanks, while at the same time, producing a report acceptable to the penny conscious Canadian Government.

Melgund's third important Canadian contribution was to the North-West Campaign. On his way to Qu'Appelle, March 24th, 1885, Major-General F. D. Middleton requested Melgund to serve as a member of his staff during the campaign. Three days later, with the consent of his wife, and leave from Lansdowne, Melgund left Ottawa. On April 6th, he was appointed Middleton's Chief of Staff, and until his departure from Batoche on May 9th, remained close to the General.

Melgund's appointment was not entirely Middleton's doings, nor was it without design.⁴ Somewhat suspicious of Middleton's military abilities, the Canadian Government was anxious to secure Melgund's appointment. Despite the fact that his wife was a French-Canadian Middleton was never happy in Canada. He stayed only because he could not "afford to 'chuck up'".⁵ Convinced of French-Canadian disloyalty,⁶ Middleton resented his exile in this "blackguard country"⁷ "of base drunken lying and corrupt men".⁸ Even had he possessed great military ability, Middleton's contempt for this country and its people would not have inspired the Government's confidence in his capacity to lead the Canadian Militia in the North-West Campaign. To reassure themselves, and the Canadian people, it would appear, from Caron, Lansdowne and Melgund correspondence, that the Government, particularly A. P. Caron, Minister of Militia and Defense, and John A. Macdonald, Prime Minister, insisted on Melgund's appointment.

Middleton welcomed Melgund as both friend and trusted adviser,⁹ in spite of the Canadian Government's insistence on the appointment. Timid, aloof, and

⁴P.A.C., *Caron Papers*, Middleton to Caron, 1 April, 1885.

⁵P.A.C., *Minto Papers*, Middleton to Melgund, 18 February, 1886.

⁶*Ibid.*, Middleton to Minto, 5 December, 1893.

⁷*Ibid.*, Middleton to Melgund, 4 February, 1886.

⁸*Ibid.*, Middleton to Melgund, 18 February, 1886.

⁹*Caron Papers*, Middleton to Caron, 27 March, 1885.

almost chronically apprehensive of the military deficiency of the hastily recruited, raw, Canadian officers and men of the North-West Field Force, Middleton surrounded himself with Imperial officers like Melgund, Laurie, Haig, Wise and Van Straubenzie.¹⁰ During the campaign, Middleton's too close association with these men, and his apparent neglect and distrust of Canadian officers like Otter, Denison, Grasset and Williams, created serious criticism and dissatisfaction with his command.

After the campaign, Canadian criticism of Middleton's military leadership crystallized around three controversial events: the wisdom of dividing the main Qu'Appelle to Batoche Column at Clark's Crossing; the responsibility for a confused command to retreat on the first day of the Batoche battle; and, the meaning of Melgund's sudden departure for Ottawa on May 9th. From Melgund's close correspondence with Lansdowne and Caron during the campaign, and his subsequent letters to Middleton, and his friends, it is possible to clear some of the confusion surrounding these three events.

Middleton's Clark's Crossing decision, a self-confessed failure, was not so much the result of an unbending determination to retain his original campaign plan, as his indecision and miscalculation. Middleton's battle plan, outlined on April 9th, "was simple in the extreme".¹¹ His North-West Field Force, was divided into three columns, posted at Qu'Appelle, Swift Current and Calgary. Respectively commanded by Major-General F. D. Middleton, Lieut-Col. W. D. Otter, and Major-General T. Bland Strange, each column was ordered to march northward to prevent the conjunction of Indian and Métis forces. During the northern march, the 'main' column, Middleton's Qu'Appelle to Batoche force, was to be shadowed by Otter's 'middle' column marching parallel on the west bank of the Saskatchewan. However, the Frog Lake massacre, the siege of Battleford, and the resulting fear of Indian reinforcements forced Otter to concentrate his men at Battleford. Undaunted by Otter's delay, and afraid of Indian fighters from the west reaching Batoche, Middleton decided to divide his column to provide his left bank protection envisaged in the earlier plans.

Against the considered advice of his Chief of Staff, Middleton, on April 20th, at Clark's Crossing, divided his main column. Half of Middleton's men, under the command of Lieut-Col. C. E. Motizambert, assisted by Melgund, crossed to the west bank; the rest, under his command, remained on the east side. On the eve of the division Melgund all but persuaded Middleton to choose an alternate plan. Melgund's plan would have brought the entire column to the west bank, thus securing the needed buffer between Indians and Métis, while at the same time retaining the strength of the force intact. Late that night, a telegram from Irving warning the General that a hostile war party of Battleford Indians was on its way to Batoche, confirmed Middleton's decision to have a western buffer force. However, advised by his chief transport officer, Samuel L. Bedson, of the difficulty of transporting all the men and supplies across the river, Middleton chose the compromise half plan.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, G. T. Orton to Caron, 10 September, 1885.

¹¹G. F. G. Stanley, *Louis Riel*, (Toronto, 1963), p. 324.

The folly of Middleton's choice was soon revealed. Four days later, on April 24, at Fish Creek, a crack Métis band, led by Gabriel Dumont, ambushed the reduced eastern force. Hastily Middleton ordered the reunion of his forces; but it was too late. The battle left ten dead and forty-three wounded. Some years later, writing in the *United Services Magazine*, Middleton acknowledged his error, and noted Melgund's shrewder opposition to the division at Clark's Crossing.¹²

The folly of the Clark's Crossing decision seriously weakened morale, and Canadian confidence in Middleton's command. Disaffection and impatience with Middleton's cautious strategy, and want of trust in his Canadian troops, erupted into open revolt on the fourth day of the Batoche battle. Led by the commanding officer of the Midlands Regiment, Arthur T. H. Williams, Conservative M.P. for East Durham, the Canadian Militia Force, without Middleton's permission, and contrary to his command, stormed Batoche, ending what they considered unnecessary delay, and thus pre-empting Middleton's rumoured decision to request British regular troops.

The success of William's revolt encouraged other men to document Middleton's inept leadership. In a lengthy letter to the *Toronto Mail* on January 28th, 1886, Brigade Surgeon, Dr. George T. Orton, M.P., "The drunken Doctor",¹³ as Middleton called him, attributed the prolongation of the campaign, with its attendant casualties and hardships, to Middleton's caution, fear and indecision. As an example of his charges, Orton asserted that Middleton had only been prevented from retreating on the first day of the Batoche battle by a deputation of protesting officers, among whom Orton listed Melgund.

Understandably stung by Orton's charges, Middleton sought the advice of his former Chief of Staff, Lord Melgund. In fact, on this occasion, the opposite had been true. Melgund had cautioned Middleton the night before the battle to withdraw to the prairie camp if he encountered strong Métis resistance.

In reply to Middleton's inquiry, Melgund suggested a plausible alternate explanation for Dr. Orton's confused assertions, which regardless of Middleton's repeated denials gained wide credence.¹⁴ According to Melgund's recollection, in the early afternoon of the first day of the Batoche battle

. . . the rebels set fire to the bush in front of the church in which were our wounded. We thought they might advance under cover of the smoke, and that the wounded wd be in danger in the church. I therefore by yr order told Dr. Orton to get the wounded out of the church, and to bear off towards the camp. This was done, but soon afterwards I found that the ammunition waggons had gone off as well as the waggons with the wounded and I sent after them to stop the ammunition. My impression is that all the waggons both those with ammunition & those with wounded were stopped by this order. They had not gone far, and you soon after decided to remain where you were & to move up your camps from the prairie.

¹²F. D. Middleton, "Suppression of Rebellion in the North West Territories of Canada, 1885," *United Services Magazine*, (January, 1894), pp. 376-7.

¹³*Minto Papers*, Middleton to Melgund, 4 February, 1886.

¹⁴See, Lieutenant-Col. Houghton's (Middleton's second in command) remarks in the *Montreal Gazette* (3 February, 1894) and (31 March, 1894).

It seems possible that this order of mine to stop his ammunition waggons may be the foundation for the statement in the his [sic] letter as to the orders for retreat being cancelled.¹⁵

If Melgund's theory is correct, his explanation clears the confusion surrounding Middleton's orders on the first day of the Batoche battle.

Something of a mystery has surrounded Melgund's sudden departure for Ottawa, in the late afternoon of May 9th, the first day of the Batoche battle. Some past writers have dismissed this incident as a meaningless journey for private reasons.¹⁶ Others have contended that Melgund's Ottawa mission was to protest the growing insubordination of Middleton's 'political' officers.¹⁷ However, many Canadians then and since, believed Melgund left camp with Middleton's instructions to request British regular reinforcements.¹⁸ Elements of truth exist in all three explanations; in part, because Middleton's orders were neither written nor explicit.

Middleton decided to send Melgund to Ottawa, rather than some other equally qualified officer, for private and personal reasons. Ever since the campaign's commencement, Melgund's recently confined wife, and sickly father, had anxiously pressured Lansdowne to secure his early return.¹⁹ Ottawa rumours that Melgund had been shot did little to reassure their anxiety. Finally, Lansdowne informed Middleton that Melgund must return after the force reached Prince Albert. After that, the rebellion was a N.W.M.P. responsibility.

If private and personal considerations determined Middleton's choice of Ottawa spokesman, the critical military situation following the first day of the Batoche battle provided the occasion. Badly shaken by the Fish Creek defeat, and faced with growing unrest among his dissident Canadian officers, Middleton seriously considered requesting British regular reinforcements.²⁰ However Melgund's Ottawa mission was not to ask specifically for British troops. He left Batoche with no written instructions.²¹ Rather, Middleton ordered him to brief Caron on the seriousness of the military situation. To quote Melgund:

I was to put the matter plainly before Caron. I am not sure whether I took down notes as to what was to be telegraphed, but I wired from Humboldt as to movement of troops as you had desired. I took a lot of information to Caron some of it in writing as to supplies, etc. which I think came chiefly from Bell, but I had no written despatch from you . . . you wished me to express your opinions to Caron as strongly as I could.²²

¹⁵*Minto Papers*, Melgund to Middleton, 21 February, 1886.

¹⁶J. K. Howard, *Strange Empire*, (Toronto, 1965), p. 395; and, C. P. Mulvaney, *The History of the Northwest Rebellion of 1885*, (Toronto, 1885), p. 213.

¹⁷W. McCartney Davidson, *Riel*, (Calgary, 1942), p. 177.

¹⁸Mulvaney, *Op. cit.*, p. 281; P.A.C., *Denison Diary*, May 10, 1885; C. A. Boulton, *Reminiscences of the North West Rebellion*, (Toronto, 1886), p. 266; Arnold Haultain (ed.), *Goldwin Smith's Correspondence*, (Toronto, 1913).

¹⁹*Minto Papers*, Lansdowne to Melgund, 14 March, 1885; *Caron Papers*, Tupper to Macdonald, 22 April, 1885.

²⁰*Minto Papers*, Middleton to Melgund, 10 November, 1885.

²¹Middleton, however, asserts that Melgund had written instructions. See, F. D. Middleton, *Suppression of the Rebellion in the North West Territories of Canada 1885*. (Toronto, 1948), p. 47.

²²*Minto Papers*, Minto to Middleton, 10 December, 1893.

Although Melgund did not recall talk of British regulars, Middleton did. The proposed request for British troops was based on speculation of a long campaign. However Melgund had not reached Ottawa, when the Canadian troops stormed Batoche, breaking the back of Métis resistance, and ending talk of British reinforcements.

Melgund's diary is disappointingly devoid of political commentary. However during a brief visit to Britain in the summer of 1885, in an article written for the *Nineteenth Century*²³ Melgund outlined his interpretation of the causes, strategy and likely results of the Saskatchewan uprising. Although neither original nor particularly perceptive Melgund's remarks may be of interest to the reader of this diary.

To explain the causes of the Saskatchewan Rebellion Melgund used a conspiracy theory popular among some people at the time. Although convinced that Ottawa mal-administration and neglect created the conditions for Rebellion, Melgund argued that the cause lay much deeper, in what he termed "white sedition". In anticipation of "future fortune" white land sharks bought up land along the originally proposed northern C.P.R. route, in places like Prince Albert, Battleford and Edmonton. Disappointed by the government's decision to run the line along a more southern route, these white land sharks sowed sedition among the Indians and Métis. In Melgund's opinion:

Riel and Gabriel Dumont were not counting only on their half-breed and Redskin rifles, but on the support of white men, who they had been gulled into believing would stand by them. Riel put his fighting men in his first line, but in his second line we may perhaps find the disappointed white contractor, the disappointed white land shark, the disappointed white farmer.²⁴

Melgund's theory, although interesting, is probably too simple to be entirely convincing.

Something of a romantic optimist Melgund ended his rebellion observations on a happy, though somewhat unrealistic, note. Like many men he deplored the recent slaughter of buffalo, aware of its economic implications for the Indian-Métis hunter. He regretted the "inevitable" passing of the Red Man, "once the ruler of the soil". Yet, he concluded, "on the whole, the rebellion will do good."²⁵ He predicted it would lead to a searching inquiry into the governmental system in the North-West, and the creation of Indian agencies, and the "future means of rule". Immigration, he believed, freed from fears of Indian-Métis opposition, would increase.²⁶ According to Melgund, the common French-English co-operation to suppress the rebellion would result in a renewed national unity.²⁷ In the struggle between prairie and plough, Melgund reluctantly but firmly chose the plough.

²³Lord Melgund, "The Recent Rebellion in North West Canada", *The Nineteenth Century*, (August, 1885).

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 314.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 315.

²⁶Melgund's re-assurances were, no doubt, motivated by the unfavorable immigration press caused by the Rebellion in British journals like *The Times* (1 April, 1885); (3 April, 1885); (9 May, 1885).

²⁷Melgund, *Op. cit.*, p. 326.

The accompanying diary account of Melgund's North-West campaign printed below remains substantially unchanged. The document is divided into five parts: the daily diary, brief general comments, a description of the Battle of Fish Creek, and that of Batoche, as well as a more detailed account of transport and supplies. All editorial corrections have been placed in the usual square brackets beside the original text. Spelling errors are treated similarly; but once a correction has been made, subsequently it is printed in its correct form. Explanatory footnotes have been added. Sentence structure, punctuation and grammatical construction have not been altered. The publication of this diary is intended to supplement similar accounts and to be read in conjunction with them. It is hoped that its publication will contribute to a better understanding of the detailed events of the North-West campaign of 1885.

Carman Miller

NORTH-WEST CAMPAIGN—1885

[1] [*Daily Record*]

MARCH 26th. Leave Ottawa by C.P.R. 11.5 p.m. for Winnipeg.

MARCH 27th. Breakfast, Government House, Toronto.
Leave 1.25 p.m.

MARCH 28th. Arrive Chicago 8.55 a.m.
Leave by Rock Island Route at 11 a.m.

MARCH 29th. Arrive Minneapolis 7 a.m. expecting to go on at once to Winnipeg, but being Sunday, find no train till the evening. Come to West Hotel.

On leaving Ottawa Sir J. M.¹ expected no serious trouble in the N.W. though he had not heard that Irvine² had joined Crozier's³ force at Ft. Carlton. Since leaving Ottawa I see by American newspapers that Crozier had had fight near Duck Lake, and that Irvine succeeded in reaching the fort before his return, they are both now at Fort Carlton. Riel reported by the same papers to have guns with him, which he has procured from the States. No doubt all much exaggerated, but am inclined to think rising more important than was supposed in Ottawa. General Middleton⁴ left Ottawa a few days before I did, and is now at Winnipeg or Qu'Appelle. He wrote to me (a letter which I got before starting) saying he would like to have me with him. I afterwards saw Sir J.M. who told me that they intended to make me a Colonel in the Militia, and that they wanted me to raise all the mounted riflemen I could (a squadron if possible) in the Winnipeg district. I see

¹J.M. is Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald, Minister of the Interior, 1878-1883; Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, 1878-1887.

²Lieut.-Col. Acheson Gosford Irving, born in Quebec City in 1837 was commissioner of the North West Mounted Police, 1880-1886.

³Major Lief N. F. Crozier was superintendent of the N.W.M.P. at Fort MacLeod.

⁴Major-Gen. Frederick Dobson Middleton, the North-West Field Force's Commanding Officer was born in Belfast, Ireland in 1825. From 1884 to 1890 Middleton was General Officer commanding the Canadian Militia.



Department of National Defense, Ottawa.
General Middleton is in the foreground on the white horse, Lord Melgund is the person on extreme right of the picture.

in an American paper I am to be 2nd. in command, but have heard nothing official since leaving Ottawa. Portions of A. and B. Batteries and infantry under Otter⁵ from Toronto said to be on their way to N. West. Indians are said to be on the whole loyal.

Leave Minneapolis 9.10 p.m. for Winnipeg. Interviewed by newspaper correspondents in the afternoon, but told them they knew more than I did.

MARCH 30th. Monday, 1.25 p.m. on asking name of a station surprised to find it was Minto. Arrived Winnipeg 7 p.m. Go to Government House, Honble Mr. Aikens.⁶ Saw Mr. Norquay⁷ and Mr. Rigley, [Wrigley] head man Hudson's Bay. Much anxiety as to Indians round Battleford, people there have gone into fort, and Indians said to be threatening, but on the whole news not so bad. Many half breeds and strangers said to be in Winnipeg, and some anxiety as to arms stored there. No news as to Irvine and Crozier except that they have evacuated Ft. Carlton as a bad position and gone to Prince Albert where there is a white settlement.

⁵Lieut.-Col. William Dillon Otter, Commanding Officer of the "Middle" (Swift Current) Column of the N.W.F. Force, was born in Canada west in 1843. Before the campaign Otter was O.C. the Infantry School at Toronto. Later he commanded Canada's First Contingent to the South African war.

⁶James C. Aikins, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, 1882-88.

⁷John Norquay, Conservative Premier of Manitoba, 1878-1887.

MARCH 31st. Leave Winnipeg by 8.30 a.m. for Qu'Appelle. No news from Irvine and Crozier. It is reported that Duck Lake insurgents have passed through Battleford. Men in train who ought to be able to judge think that rebels will bolt, if they have not already done so, and try to escape into Montana.

APRIL 1st. Arrived Qu'Appelle about 3.30 a.m. News from Battleford bad. Farm instructors have been killed.⁸

APRIL 2nd. Left Qu'Appelle at 8.30 a.m., column having started a little before us. Column consisted of 3 corps, 90th, and 1 gun (8 lbs. R.M.L.) Arrive at Ft. Qu'Appelle at 12 noon having passed column on way. Come to Mr. McDonald's (Hudson's Bay Agent). He knows Fitzzy,⁹ as F. stayed with him buffalo hunting at Ft. Ellice. He is a Scotchman and we are delighted to make acquaintance.

In the afternoon drove out with Mr. McDonald and Bedson¹⁰ who is doing a sort of A.M.G. work to "Obriens"¹¹ [O'Brien's] about nine miles further on from here, and where we shall probably camp the first night of advance, or where the wagons will halt at any rate. A very pretty country, rolling and copse wood here and there like a park. Much talk with McDonald, a clear-headed man. Tells me a strong force should certainly be left here under a sensible [c]hap as half breeds here are very threatening, and there are a large number of them.

APRIL 3rd. Short field day this morning, with 90th, men very willing and intelligent, and I was agreeably surprised at their performance. The two guns of Winnipeg F. Battery also fired a few rounds of blank, also very creditable, more particularly as the horses are quite new to the work. After luncheon target practice with 90th., pretty good. Some men have got out of Prince Albert and have arrived at Touchwood—one of them is to come on here tomorrow.

APRIL 4th. Man came in from Prince Albert to-day (Gordon)¹² had left there day after fight, 27th March, fight was on 26th. Also got cypher message from Irvine at Prince Albert addressed to [Dewdney]¹³ and which operator at Humboldt therefore sent to General. The man had left Prince Albert on 30th. Irvine is in fort there which he has fortified. He had 200 Mtd. Police and 200 armed civilians, and the people go into fort when alarm is sounded, but he has not been attacked since he went in. He is fairly well off for provisions and ammunition. There was only one fight. Rebels are now at Duck Lake, and also on the east side of river.

⁸On March 31, 1885 two men were killed by an Assiniboine Indian of the Mosquito reserve. They were farm instructor James Payne, and Belgian Rancher Bernard Tremont.

⁹Fitzzy is Melgund's youngest brother, Fitzwilliams, who had previously been in Canada.

¹⁰Captain Samuel Bedson, formerly warden of Stoney Mountain jail, was Middleton's Chief transport Officer.

¹¹A.M.G. may be a typographical error intended to mean Q.M.G.—Quarter Master General—to Lieut.-Col. William Frederick O'Brien, commanding Officer of the York and Simcoe Provisional Battalion, stationed at Fort Qu'Appelle. O'Brien was also M.P. for Muskoka.

¹²Probably Constable S. F. Gordon of the N.W.M.P., rather than Rev. W. Gordon, Chaplain of the 90th.

¹³Edgar Dewdney, Lieutenant-Governor of the Northwest, 1881-88. Later Minister of the Interior, 1888-1892.



Public Archives of Canada.

The troops on the march passing through a coulee in the Qu'Appelle valley.

Much talk with McDowell [Macdowall] to-day as to half breed claims. He is a lumber merchant of Prince Albert. The half breeds appear to have been badly treated, and the Government to have had ample warning of what the consequences might be. Our wire is open to Humboldt and Clark's crossing. No news from Battleford.

A telegram from my father to-night from New Club, Edinburgh, asking if rebellion would alter plans as to our going home this summer—forwarded by Streatty¹⁴ from Ottawa. I wired Mary¹⁵ to cable home that much must depend on duration of rebellion, but that we still hoped to be home.

APRIL 5th. General Wise¹⁶ and I went out for ride after luncheon—such a lovely country. Church parade in the morning. News this morning from some half breeds who have left Riel's camp and come to Clark's Crossing that much dissatisfaction exists there, and that some of the leading men have bolted. We march to-morrow at 7 a.m. with the troops here, vizt. [sic] 90th. Battn. Half Winnipeg Field Battery, and scouts. [Details about the strength of the force have been deleted.]

APRIL 6th. Column marched at 7 a.m., General and staff started soon after it. I was in orders last night as chief of staff. Great job getting guns up first hill, but they say there is nothing so bad between this and Saskatchewan. Men very willing and handy. Camped about 12 miles from Ft. Qu'Appelle. Very windy cold day, and miserably uncomfortable in camp.

APRIL 7th. Reveille at 5.30 by way of marching at 7 a.m., but tent pegs frozen in so hard were much delayed. Halted in middle of day, after about 10 miles, and marched another 5 before we camped. Camp in very nice place, in rolling country covered with spinnies [shrubs]. Weather much better to-day, but very cold. I am Chief of the Staff. The men marched to-day with very few exceptions. The first day they rode in waggons by turn. We had about 120 waggons to-day. The first night we placed them in a solid oblong, and camped outside. To-night have arranged them in a horse shoe, poles inward, horses inside, and also camp of 90th. and nearly all artillery, the guns being just inside the gorge of the horse shoe.

APRIL 8th. Halted all yesterday (today?).

APRIL 9th. Reveille at 5 a.m. Supposed to march at 6 a.m., but did not get off till 6.45. Arrived at Touchwood 3.55 p.m., having marched over 20 miles. Much news to-night. Massacre of whites by Indians at Frog Lake. Battleford completely surrounded. Irvine sends to Humboldt, and from there it is wired on that rebels have dug rifle pits in many advantageous places. Camped to-night with infantry and artillery in front of horse shoe formation of carts, instead of having infantry inside. Head Qrs. tents inside of horse shoe in rear of the regimental camps. [A graphic illustration of the Camp omitted.]

¹⁴Captain Henry Streatfield, of the Grenadier Guards, A.D.C. to Lansdowne, and in Melgund's absence, acting Military Secretary.

¹⁵Mary is Melgund's wife, daughter of General Charles Grey, and sister to Canada's ninth Governor-General Earl Grey, 1905-11.

¹⁶General E. Wise was A.D.C. to Middleton, formerly of the Cameroneans and Derbyshire Regiment.

APRIL 10th. Marched same time as usual, and camped for night about 24 miles from H.B. Post at Touchwood, viz., a march of 23 miles. General Laurie¹⁷ joined us to-day, but not in any official position. He travelled up with C. Copy [company] who joined us soon after we pitched our camp.

APRIL 11th. Reveille at 5 a.m., marched about 7, most of way across what is called the Salt Plain, a great deal of it wet and marshy, no wood, and very hard marching. Camped at the Mail Station after doing over 20 miles. The men are marching wonderfully. Last night I succeeded in collaring one of the police horses, on the way down from Humboldt to Qu'Appelle, and gave the man who brought him my grey in exchange. The one I have got is a Broncho, an iron grey, and they say a very good horse. He had come in from Humboldt yesterday, which is 60 miles. I therefore rode one of the ponies to-day. The man who brought him is an Indian (or half breed) who has been with the police. He says they have been quite surrounded at P. Albert since the fight.

APRIL 12th. SUN. Reveille at 6, marched soon after 7 a.m. Rode my new grey horse, and am very pleased with him. Camped north side of the plain, having done somewhere about 20 miles. The salt plains are a dreadfully barren, marshy waste. Luckily for us the frost is still in the ground, so that the wet places had hard bottoms, otherwise I do not know how we should have got across. To-day we gave up the horse shoe formation for the carts and have adopted a complete circle for them, with the camp outside.

APRIL 13th. MON. Arrived at Humboldt to-night. Find here 3 Mtd. Police. March to-day was about 21 miles. Are encamped in a nice place, looking due north over open country, though plenty of wood about here. Two pickets out tonight, and a rear guard in the lager. Macdowall and Bedson left this afternoon for P. Albert. General told me to-day he intended to attack rebels at Batoche, where they are chiefly established on the south side. He himself to go by direct trail, and me with other half of force by trail from Gabriel's Crossing, but from information this evening the road appears to be too favourable for enemy, shall therefore probably all go by Clark's Crossing. All our information shows that people in P. Albert are in no immediate danger, though Irvine's messages to us all make out his position is a bad one, and ask us to bring large force, and to come direct to P. Albert. We can not make out that rebels are more than 700, 400 of whom are said to be Indians, but we think that number must be exaggerated. A great many of them are badly armed, while a certain number have Winchesters. Have now marched 124 miles from Ft. Qu'Appelle including one day's halt.

APRIL 14th. TUES. News from Battleford this morning. Morris¹⁸ the policeman in command there, implores General to come to his aid for sake of women and children, and says that there are ominous signs, which make their power to hold out doubtful. This complicates matters, as it may be necessary for us to go straight

¹⁷General John Wimburn Laurie, 1935-1912, a Crimean veteran, lived in Nova Scotia, and represented the constituency of Shelburne 1887-91 in the House of Commons. Although senior to Middleton in rank, he volunteered for service, sinking his seniority.

¹⁸W. S. Morris, was N.W.M.P. superintendent at Battleford.

to Battleford instead of attacking Riel. Otter left Swift Current Station yesterday for Battleford. He expected to get there in seven days. [List of the units in Otter's force deleted]¹⁹ Major General Laurie left us yesterday, the General having appointed him Base Commandant. He goes to Swift Current. He is very fussy, and I am afraid may be troublesome.

Troops halted today.

This afternoon General Wise and I went out with fifteen scouts to see if we could see anything of Riel's scouts, but saw nothing. Mail to-day, and letters from Ottawa March 31st. and April 3rd.

APRIL 15th. WED. Left Humboldt about 7 a.m. and did a long march of about 23 miles. Major Bolton²⁰ [Boulton] arrived this evening, his camp about 5 miles behind us.

APRIL 16th. THURS. Marched as usual, but General went on with one gun, C Copy and about 20 scouts to Clark's Crossing, we following him, and camping 12 miles from the crossing, having marched 24 miles against a very high wind, and bitter cold.

APRIL 17th. FRI. Marched to Clark's Crossing, about 10 miles, arriving about 11 a.m. The Saskatchewan a muddy looking river with high banks—a prairie on both sides. We are encamped on South Side on the prairie which is a kind of table land which comes close up to the steep bank of river. A few settlers' houses here. No authentic news of Riel. Battleford reported quite safe.

APRIL 18th. SAT. Went out in command of reconnoitering party of whole of Boulton's cavalry, about 70 men. Very bad day, strong, north wind and snow. Lost three scouts before long, owing to thick weather, and want of practice of men, but got them back again. Sighted some Indians, and gave chase, and surrounded them in thick bush on river bank. Not at all inclined to surrender. Several men who could speak Indian went down to them unarmed, but they shook their fists at them. French²¹ at last managed to shake hands with them, and they came up. We did not take their arms from them. They had a Winchester and two shot guns. This was about 12 miles from camp, and I sent a man in for a waggon, who met us about 5 miles from home. French behaved very well when we took them. One of them covered him with his rifle. They seem however to like French. They say they had seen him before. They turn out to be two sons and a son-in-law of Whitecap²² the Sioux chief. They say they do not like the half breeds, but are afraid to leave

¹⁹Melgund's calculations of Otter's strength varies by over 100 from that of G. H. Needler's in *Louis Riel* (Toronto, 1951), p. 22, which are, in fact, Middleton's figures, see, Middleton, *Suppression of the Rebellion in the North West Territories of Canada 1885*, (Toronto, 1948), p. 22.

²⁰Major Charles Arkell Boulton, a Canadian Officer who served in the 100th Regiment for some years saw action during both Riel affairs. Later he became a senator. In 1886, he published *Reminiscences of the North West Rebellion*.

²¹Captain John French, brother of the first N.W.M.P. commissioner, G. A. French had, for a time, been in the Irish Militia. He was a N.W.M.P. inspector, and commander of a troop of Scouts during the Rebellion.

²²In 1862 Chief White Cap led a band of Sioux refugees to the Saskatchewan, following the Minnesota massacre. During the Rebellion White Cap joined Riel.

them. We have arranged for one to go back, and to keep the other two. This evening I went to talk again to them, and told them that the General would be very glad if the one who was going back would stay a day or two longer, which he gladly agreed to, and I told him from the General that if he would keep track of Riel and give us good information, we would give him a good gun, and that if it led to Riel's being taken we would give him a horse too. This he also agreed to. We disarmed them when we got them into camp.

APRIL 19th. SUN. There was church parade, but as I had to go down to the Ferry with the General I missed it. It is now arranged that we move up both banks of river. The General goes with the force on this side. Montizambert²³ as senior officer will be in command of the other (viz the western force) and I go with that as chief staff officer. We begin crossing to-morrow. [A list of the units in the eastern and western forces has been deleted]

APRIL 20th. MON. Crossing a difficult job owing to the time it took to rig the ferry (a scow on a wire). There are however two scows and both of them can be rowed. Got over the mounted men of this column and some transport. Was most of the day on the other side of the river myself. Macdowall and Bedson got back from P. Albert in the middle of last night. The P. Albert estimate of rebels strength greater than what we have from all other sources. Doucet²⁴ came with Macdowall and Bedson from Humboldt and has joined the force as extra A.D.C. to the General.

[Note on supplies deleted]

Remainder of Western column crossed today, and I came over myself for good, after dining at Hd. Qrs. [Head Quarters] on the other side. The wire had been cut between this and Humboldt, and General had gone out with some mounted men and had not come back when I left. Signalled across river to-night with bugles, a complete success.

I strongly advised General to-day not to divide this force, but to advance complete up this bank, i.e. Western Bk. [Bank] He admitted risk of division, and had nearly agreed to cross whole force when a remark of Bedson's as to transport caused him to decide not to cross more men here, but to advance on both sides to Gabriel's Crossing, and if necessary join with us there. I strongly disapprove of a division of force.

APRIL 22nd. WED. Went out with scouts to reconnoitre this side of river. Soon after starting viewed two rebel scouts, and had a tremendous chase of about 12 miles. They just got into some bluff in front of us, where they were joined by 7 others, and as our horses were beat, and I did not know how many men there might be in the bluff, I would not let them go in.

APRIL 23rd. THURS. This morning, nominally at 7 a.m., but 10th Grends. were so long getting under way we did not get off till 8 a.m. This is the West column.

²³Clearly G. F. G. Stanley's statement in *Louis Riel*, (Toronto, 1963), p. 325, that Melgund was in command of the West bank force, is an error. Lieut.-Col. C. E. Montizambert was its commanding Officer.

²⁴Captain A. E. Doucet, A.D.C. and brother-in-law to Middleton.

The General's column on the other side of the river was in sight all the way and we are now camped nearly opposite each other, about two miles apart. No hay or corn for our horses. Without we get it we can not move to-morrow. Did about 15 miles today.

APRIL 24th. FRI. Got up early this morning, about 4.30 a.m. and went down to river and found the scow and the small boat, which I took and rowed myself over to the other side and saw the General and arranged for some hay and corn being sent over. On return to camp, firing reported on the other side of river. I gave orders for lager to be made secure, and left Smith an A Batty, man (who is now doing duty as my groom) in command of lager. Smith was in 9th. Lancers in Kurrum Valley,²⁵ and has seen service, and could find no reliable officer to look after lager, so told him to do so. I then advanced down river bank, 1 company of 10th Greds. extended, then the guns, with scouts as escort. Guns and escort soon got in front of infy. [Infantry] and latter followed us. Firing heavy on opposite side, and their scouts came down to ask us to cross. I sent back for scow to come at once, but there was unavoidable delay as it took her some time to get down, and we had to unload her etc. Banks also very difficult. At last got one Compy. of 10th over. Haig²⁶ met us on opposite bank and showed us way to General's position. Found most of enemy had retired, but a certain number were established in a deep ravine from which they were firing whenever they get a chance. Now that the 10th. had come up we nearly surrounded them, our guns firing into them, as well as our infantry, but we could not dislodge them, and whenever they got a chance they took a pot shot at us. Before I arrived General had had a bullet through his cap, Doucet had been wounded, and Wise had had two horses shot under him—he himself was wounded in the foot some time after I got there.

Firing went on till late in the afternoon. General intended to camp where he was, but as it was such a very bad position I chose another place nearer the river, and very open. The General did not wish to sacrifice any more lives by sending the men into the ravine to drive out enemy, of whom I believe there were a very few left there. I then ordered the 90th. to cover our move to the fresh camping ground, they lining the ravine with the rest of the troops in action, and I took the wounded first to the new ground, the transport following—the troops soon joined us. A dreadful night, snow and horrible weather, and all my things and the 10th.'s kits at the other side of the river. Jarvis²⁷ got his two guns of W.F. Battery over river and on to ground before fight was over. Our loss heavy. [For further information about the battle of Fish Creek see part III]

APRIL 25th. SAT. Men much disheartened today, and camp gloomy. We had left two men dead on the field. General proposed to go up to ravine to get them, but strong feeling amongst officers of force against doing so, as we did not know if it was occupied or not. General did not therefore send, and I think he was right.

²⁵Melgund had been in the Kurrum Valley during the Russo-Turkish war in 1877, as *Morning Post* Military correspondent, and Intelligence officer for the war office.

²⁶Captain Haig, Royal Engineers, stationed at Halifax, volunteered for service in the North West Field Force, and became assistant Quarter Master General.

²⁷Major E. W. Jarvis, cousin of N.W.M.P. inspector W. D. Jarvis, commanded the Winnipeg Field Battery.

I spent most of day at river, trying to get scow to work, and wire fixed across, also rode with French a little way down other side and could see this side well. He had seen many rebels retiring yesterday, and numbers of loose cattle were wandering about here. French and I convinced enemy have retired. This afternoon Johnstone (the American correspondent) [for the St. Paul's *Pioneer Press*] and McKormick (a man belonging to Bedson I think) went out and got all the rebel cattle into camp. Effect on men very good, as it cheered them up, the gloom all day being dreadful.

General has now decided to unite forces, and bring the Western force over here, and I have advised him to go at once on to open prairie and advance on P. Albert by what is called the Hudson's Bay Crossing, leaving Batoche on the left, and so for present avoiding direct attack on enemy's position. This I think he will do. I look upon the importance of relieving Prince Albert as very great, not that I think it is in danger, but that the moral effect of our getting there would greatly benefit the whole N. West. News from Battleford to-day. Otter has got in all right without fighting.

General exposed himself very much in yesterday's fight and enemy seems to have tried to pick him off constantly. From what we hear main body of enemy appears to have made their stand here. Hourie [Hourie]²⁸ (our interpreter) towards the end of the fight called over the bank of the ravine and asked if Gabriel Dumart [Dumont]²⁹ was there. Answer was that he was. He is a desperate man and good shot, and is acting as C. in C. They would not enter into conversation with Hourie.

APRIL 26th. SUN. There was an alarm last night, and whole camp turned out very creditably. Turns out to have been Bradbury and another man who were in charge of a convoy who had left their convoy and come on by themselves to look for our camp. They were fired on by our pickets, and whole camp alarmed. They themselves hid in the bush and came in this morning. We sent out an escort for the convoy, and glad to say they came in to-night.

To-day we took a strong party up the scene of fight. Our own two dead were found also three dead Indians, and 55 dead ponies. Some of the latter were alive still, and we shot them. There were rifle pits in the ravine, and it would have been almost impossible to have turned the enemy out of it with a rush without great loss on our side, as the bush is so strong and thick. Several letters from Mary this evening, and enclosures.

APRIL 27th. MON. A rifle pit reported in neighbourhood of camp, and rebels said to have been seen on line of communication side of camp. General sent me out with mounted men (69) to reconnoitre, and we also had empty waggons to fill

²⁸Tom Hourie, a Métis guide, was employed as Middleton's chief interpreter.

²⁹Gabriel Dumont, born in Edmonton, in 1840, was military commander of the Métis resistance. At the age of 25, he was made chief of the Buffalo hunt, and previous to the return of Riel, Dumont was chief of the Batoche settlement.

³⁰Major-General Thomas Bland Strange (1831-1925) came to Canada in 1871 as inspector of artillery. He commanded the Calgary Column of the N.W. Field Force. His autobiography *Gunner Jingo Jubilee*. (London, 1894) contains an account of his North West experience.

up with hay near Mackintosh's, also brought back some stores which had been left on river bank near Mackintosh's day of fight. Got all back into camp. Rifle pit turned out to be where a man had been trying to dig out a badger.

APRIL 28th. TUES. An easy day. Scouts brought in more cattle and ponies. The two men who came into camp last night from P. Albert started back there this evening. They say that the woods called the "Pine Woods" on the other side of the river are full of hostile Indians, also that the best way to attack rebels is from the north, and to drive them out on to the prairie where they could be done for, whereas if we attacked Batoche on south side they would retire into the Pine Woods, and to the north, and we should have great difficulty in subduing them.

APRIL 29th. WED. General, Haig and I went out with 25 of Boulton's Mtd. Infy. and reconnoitred towards prairie, due inland about four miles, bush for about three miles, and then open prairie.

APRIL 30th. THURS. [Disposition of forces deleted] Went out in the afternoon with the General, Haig, and 25 of Boulton's Mounted Infantry and reconnoitred in Batoche direction. Found nothing but deserted houses, and trail of many horses, all moving towards Batoche, apparently a general move of rebels in that direction. It is a pity we could not follow up fight of 24th. at once. Lt. Suniford (90th) died today of wound in his head. [2nd Lieut. Charles Swinford]

MAY 1st. FRI. [Casualty return deleted] Wounded were sent away this morning to Saskatoon with Boulton's Mounted Infantry as escort. They go to Clark's Crossing today, and arrangements have been made by inhabitants of Saskatoon to take care of them. Wise and Doucet stay here for the present.

MAY 2nd. SAT. [List of letters in intercepted mail bag deleted] Line down again somewhere—operator thinks probably between Battleford and Clark's Crossing, which would affect Winnipeg communications as well. Otter has moved against Poundmaker, which is distinctly contrary to General's wishes telegraphed to him. It would have been better for him to keep quiet for present. If he settles Poundmaker all right, but if any hitch it would seriously affect us, and probably prevent him sending force to co-operate with us.

MAY 3rd. SUN. Church parade in the morning, and rode with General to Mackintosh's in the afternoon. Lovely weather.

MAY 4th. MON. Mounted Reconnaissance with French's Scouts and Mounted Infantry to a little beyond Gabriel's Crossing. Near there came on pickets of rebels who made off as hard as they could (mounted). They left a kettle boiling and some meat cooking in the house they left. I only saw three men myself, but the scout who first reported them said he saw a dozen. Found all the houses except this one deserted. We brought back about 20 head of cattle.

The steamer³¹ actually arrived at Clark's Crossing to-day, and is on its way down here. It ought to have arrived this evening, so I suppose it is aground again.

³¹The ill fated *S. S. Northcote* was the steamer.

The General, Haig, and I went with reconnaissance this morning. Started at 9 a.m. and got back about 6 p.m.

MAY 5th. TUES. [A copy of a proclamation offering a pardon to all rebels who surrendered has been deleted] This Proclamation was sent off by the Sioux Indian (son of the White Cap) captured near Clark's Crossing by the mounted party I took out. We keep his brother and brother-in-law in camp. He was to have been back this morning, but I always doubted his being back so soon, though I think he is acting on the square. We gave him some Proclamations in French, and one in English—five in all I think, and told him to distribute them. We sent him off on Sunday night (3rd inst.) after dark.

The long wished for steamer arrived to-day, bringing two Comps. of the Midland Batt. (Colonel Williams),³² Colonel Stranbarzie [Straubenzie],³³ and a Gatling gun, with an American officer, Captain Howard,³⁴ as instructor. Steamer also brings ammunition and stores.

Wire again open to Battleford and Troy.³⁵ News this morning from Otter that he fought Poundmaker on Sunday, 3rd., and silenced his fire, but that he, Otter, then retired on Battleford. From telegram Otter conveys impression that he has silenced Poundmaker, but says he was unable to follow up his advantage owing to his [transportation] breaking down. His moving out against Poundmaker was distinctly contrary to his orders from here, and it would have been preferable for him to have remained quiet for the present.

MAY 6th. WED. Steamer loading all day.

MAY 7th. THURS. Marched from Fish Creek. Arrived Gabriel's Crossing. Steamer coming down and arriving in afternoon.

MAY 8th. FRI. Left Gabriel's Crossing at about 7 a.m. and camped on Batoche trail about 9 or 10 miles from Batoche to-day. While camp was being pitched General and I rode on with Mtd. Infy. about five miles on trail to Batoche. Our scouts saw two scouts who bolted.

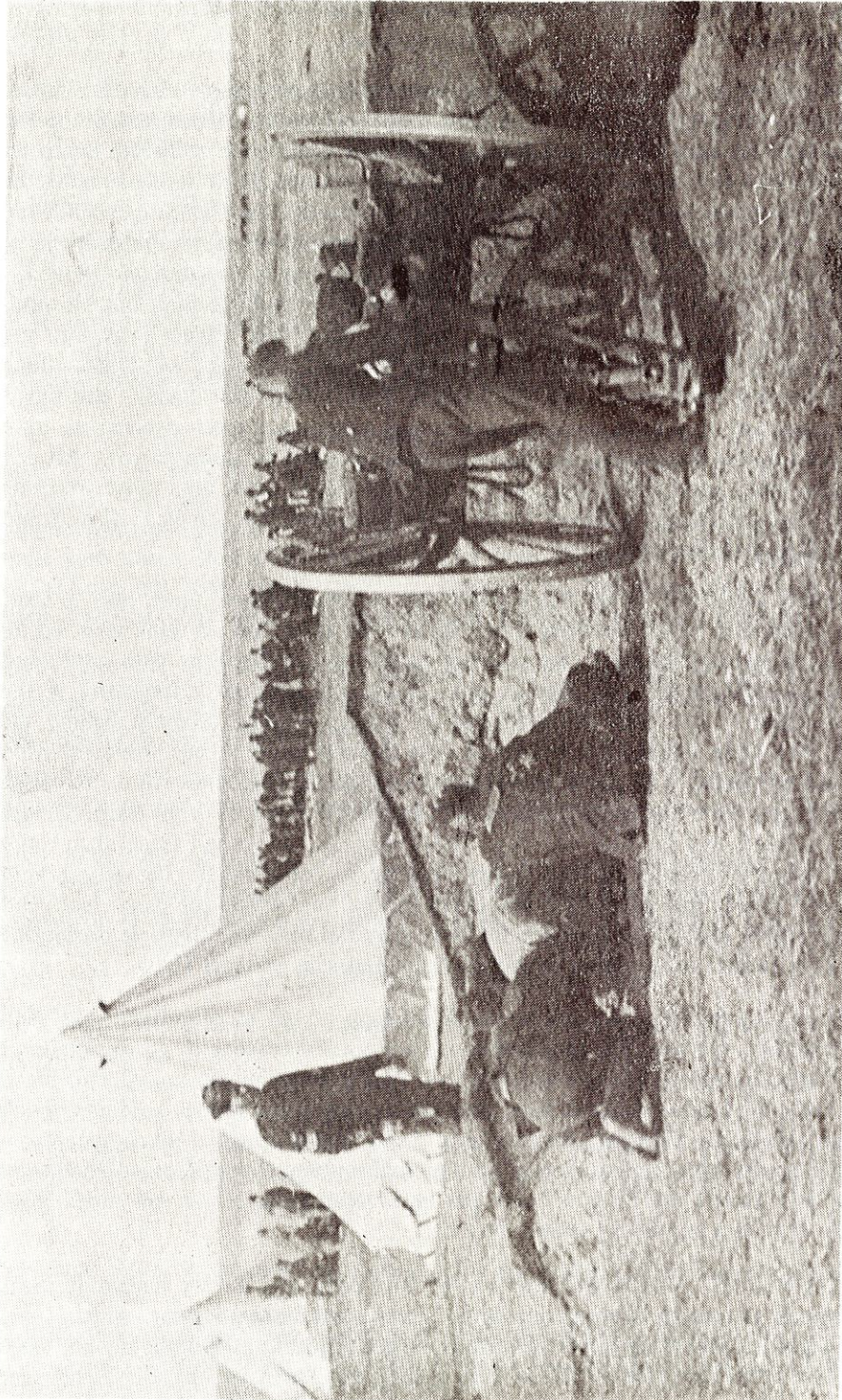
MAY 9th. SAT. Reveille at 4 a.m. to march at 5 a.m., and get off I fancy about 5.30 a.m. [Details of marching order deleted] Saw nothing till close to Batoche where trail turns to right and runs along top of river bank, where there are some houses which we shelled and set on fire. Before doing so we had heard steamer whistle, and had fired a gun to let her know we were there. Moved along river bank towards two buildings which proved to be R.C. Chapel and a house full of priests, nuns, and women and children. Howard had fired the Gatling at it once, and we all but fired a shell into it, but mercifully one of the priests had attracted

³²Lieut.-Col. Arthur T. H. Williams, conservative M.P. for East Durham.

³³Lieut.-Col. Van Straubenzie, a Crimean veteran, who later became Deputy-Adjutant-General in the Canadian Militia.

³⁴Captain Arthur L. Howard of New Haven, Connecticut, of the U.S. Army, acted for a time, as agent/demonstrator of the Gatling Machine gun, although, under criticism, the R. J. Gatling Company later disowned him.

³⁵In 1882 Troy was renamed Qu'Appelle Station.



Public Archives of Canada.

Gun pit during the rebellion. The location of this gun pit has not been identified.

attention and we did not do so. The ground in neighbourhood of church is open, but bluff comes close up to rear of church and house.

We advanced A Battery past church and on to bushy bank of river close to left of trail. From this point we had good view of Batoche House and Store, the latter said to be Riel's Council Chamber, and also good view of Indian camp on other side of river where there are many [Indians] We fired into some of the houses on this side, and also during the day into the Indian Camp, and while we were all standing on bushy banks I have mentioned, there were suddenly many Indian yells close to us, they having crept close up to our front quite unobserved—they sounded within fifty yards. We fell back sharp to open ground, but Howard, the American officer with the Gatling, kept his head, and rattled away into the bush on our front, and there was no more war whooping. It was a pretty near thing of their coming right on us, and yet I doubt if any of us saw a man—the rebels were established in pits in the bush across our front, and which divided us from the houses in the Settlement, but this belt of wood must be quite narrow. All day long our men were firing into the enemy's position, and they were replying steadily, but not firing rapidly. I doubt if the men often saw a man to fire at, but only fired in that direction.

Rebels also fired at us from other side of river where there was a large Indian camp into which we fired a few shells. The same sort of thing went on all day, viz. enemy apparently trying to creep round our left flank by river bank, and holding us in front with his men in pits. There was later on a large fire in the bush in front of us, done we suspected to enable them to advance behind the smoke. This time things looked critical, and General ordered our wounded, who were in the church, to be put in the waggons and started on the way home to camp. The waggons were therefore loaded, but the order as to their moving off was countermanded, and we held our own. Straubenzie and I advised General to retire to our camp in prairie, but he finally decided to camp where he was, a very dangerous place, but no doubt the effect of retiring would be very bad, and possibly rebels, seeing that he holds his own, may fall back and disperse during the night. [For further information on the battle of Batoche see part IV]

About 3 p.m. General told me he wished me to go to Humboldt and send some telegrams for him. He also wished me for several reasons to go to Ottawa. I accordingly started, and found our camp on prairie breaking up in order to move up to General. I left my horse here, and got a pony from French's Scouts. Took Fianner [Hon. E. Fiennes] (my orderly) and Wardrop [G. Wardrope] from French's Scouts with me and started for Humboldt about 5 p.m. Got to Hoodoo at 9 p.m. and halted till 11 p.m., and got in to Humboldt, about 65 miles from Batoche at 6.30 a.m. on our ponies very beat.

MAY 10th. SUN. A very wet trail all the first part, and a very hard ride. Sent telegram off at once to Caron, also to his Excy., and before leaving, which I did about 4 p.m. mounted by the G.G.'s Body Guard who are at Humboldt, but after about five miles was glad to fall in with a mail cart, so gave up riding, and sent

horses back to camp, and came on in mail. Got to Swinford on Salt Plain, about 50 miles, late at night.

MAY 11th. MON. Started early from Swinford with mail cart about 6 a.m. and shall go through with it to-day. (On Saturday we frequently heard the steamer firing and whistling but never saw her.) Halted at Bedson, and at Touchwood where Turnbull's³⁶ Cavalry are encamped, and got to "House's" a settler's house about 7.30 p.m., 60 miles from Swinford. Called at Touchwood telegraph station, but found communications interrupted with Humboldt and no news.

MAY 12th. TUES. Left House's at about 9 a.m. in mail cart. Halt at Houghton, where mail from Qu'Appelle meets one from north, and came on from there to Troy, about 50 miles, arriving there soon after 10 p.m., and missed train to Winnipeg. There has been more fighting at Batoche.

MAY 13th. WED. News this morning that General has got into Batoche. There seems to have some hard fighting, and then men seem to have charged through the bluffs. Riel and Gabriel Dumont are reported to have escaped. Evidently a complete success—capital. Poor French was killed. Went all over transport arrangements with Major Bell today, and much talk with Swinford as to arrangements at base. Drove out with Major Bell³⁷ in afternoon to Bell Farm and dined there. Farm is 64,000 acres, about 14,000 cultivated. [Notes on transport deleted]

MAY 14th. THURS. Left Indian Head by Pulman last night at 10.52 p.m. after dining at Bell Farm. No fresh news in newspapers to-day. Arrive Winnipeg 8.30 p.m. and go to Government House.

MAY 15th. FRI. Saw Mr. Wrigley and had conversation as to transport arrangements, and also with Colonel Whitehead.³⁸ Leave Winnipeg by 8.5 p.m. for Ottawa.

MAY 16th. SAT. Breakfast at Barnesville, 8 a.m. and got telegram from Mr. Egan [C.P.R. Superintendent at Winnipeg] that Riel was taken yesterday three miles north of Batoche by three scouts—Hooray! Arrive St. Paul 6.30 p.m. and dine.

MAY 17th. SUN. Arrive Chicago 2 p.m. Leave at 4.15 p.m.

MAY 18th. MON. Arrive at Toronto Junction 8.15 a.m., and Ottawa at 6.7 p.m. C.P.R.

[II.] [General]

Men supplied with Great Coat. 3 Blankets. Waterproof Sheet. Knapsack. [Further general information about Riel, the price of hay and the number of hides sold at St. Paul has been deleted]

³⁶Lieut.-Col. James F. Turnbull, was commander of the Quebec Cavalry School Corps posted at Touchwood.

³⁷At Qu'Appelle, Middleton's secondary supply base, he employed Captain H. Swinford as commissariat officer, and Major W. R. Bell, of the Bell Farms as transport officer.

³⁸The reimbursement of Lieut.-Col. J. M. Whitehead for expenses incurred entertaining Middleton during his Selkirk visit aroused strong criticism.

[III.] [*The Battle at Fish Creek*]

[List of forces engaged at Fish Creek deleted]

General M. camped at Mackintosh's Farm night of 23rd. [April] About six miles from Fish Creek, and fifteen from Gabriel's Crossing. Fish Creek is boundary of French half breed settlement. Boulton's Mounted Infantry were in advance, extended, and on rebels perceiving that they were outflanked by Boulton's advanced men they fired, this disclosing their position. They first opened fire from bluff on left of trail, afterwards tried to turn General's right from bluff on right of trail. Main body then retired, but leaving men in coulee which joins ravine. These men were in rifle pits.

About 1 p.m. the two guns of A Battery were sent across ravine (not by trail but to left of coulee) and took the pits in reverse, firing at a distance of about 200 yds. At this time the crest of coulee was lined by our dismounted artillery men and Boulton's Mounted Infantry (dismounted). The ground outside the coulee is quite open, but slopes upwards close to the edge, so that the men had a kind of natural parapet, and fired over it into the coulee. The 90th. occupied the bluffs on the left, and also on the extreme right of trail leading to the ravine.

The Compy. of the 10th. took up ground which was then unoccupied by us, i.e. the right crest (proper left) of the coulee. Rebels fired slowly and steadily from coulee, but with good effect. Owing to our proximity to each other all fire was at very short range. Pits were chiefly at front, where small gully joins coulee, in centre of rebel position. Fire was constantly directed from rebel pits up this gully.

Later in afternoon I selected ground for camp near river, very open, and good position. Took transport and wounded there, giving orders to 90th. to extend and cover our movement. On our troops leaving ground some of enemy appeared in bluff on the other side of ravine on right (proper left) of trail.

Action commenced about 8.30 a.m. and lasted to about 5.30 p.m. Number of small arms rounds fired averaged 25 per man.

Two men left dead on field, one of A Battery, and one of 90th. Recovered on 26th. Not in any way mutilated.

Fifty-five dead or dying rebel ponies found on 26th., and two dead Indians.

Rifle pits appeared to me hastily made, might have been done during action. Rebel intention probably to attack force while crossing ravine, but finding themselves outflanked by Boulton's men they fired too soon and disclosed themselves. The bush in the coulee was so thick and strong that it would have been difficult to carry it with a rush.

[IV.] [*The Battle of Batoche*]

On leaving our camp on 8th. we did not go by Gabriel's Creek, but took trail leading from right rear of our camp, into open prairie (about 2 miles) then turned to left across country over open prairie until we struck Batoche trail, where we camped evening of 8th. [List of the forces engaged in action at Batoche deleted].

Thirty-five men, C. Copy, Infy. School under Major Smith were sent with steamer [S.S. Northcote]. Capt. Bedson, chief Transport officer, also went with steamer. She had with her two scows with provisions. She had been strengthened and loopholed. Had on her two river pilots, Capt. Shuts [Sheets] and Capt. Signe [Seager]. Her orders were to drop down river and be off Batoche about 8 a.m. on 9th. at which time she might expect to hear our attack. She was to fire as much as she could, and make as much noise as possible in order to draw off rebels' attention from us.

One whistle was to notify her position.

Two do. to ask us for assistance.

We left her at Gabriel's Crossing on the 7th, but communicated with her on evening of 8th.

General's intention if he could not get into Batoche was to make movement of 9th. a reconnaissance, but this I believe he only told privately to me. In reconnaissance of 8th. we found fairly good ground for a camp about half way between open prairie and Batoche, and it was question whether it might not be advisable to order camp to follow us on 9th. and pitch there, but finally decided to leave camp standing on open prairie, it being in an excellent position. Distance from prairie camp to Batoche about eight miles.

On leaving camp trail enters bush, which becomes thicker on nearing Batoche, but the ground is not flat, but rolling, with open spaces here and there. Trail forks on Oni [One] Arrow's³⁹ Reserve. From reconnaissance of 8th. and information received took left hand trail. This joins Gabriel's trail close to Batoche. Possibly right hand trail from forks may lead straight into Batoche. We had hoped to come straight into Batoche.

General had all C.O.'s together on evening of 8th. and told them what was expected of them.

Boulton's Mounted Infantry, on discovering enemy's position were to retire and make way for infantry.

Boulton's Mounted Infantry, French's Scouts, the W.F. Battery and Midland Battn. were to be in reserve, the General to remain with them.

We had arranged, and practiced in camp at Fish Creek that if we had to fight through bush 2 comps. of 10th. should be extended, with a compy., in support of each, which compy. should look after the outer flank, if attempt was made to turn our flanks.

90th. to be in support of 1st. line.

Guns on our flanks.

As regards the Infantry this might have answered, but it would have been impossible to have recognized any particular place for the guns, and as long as they were within easy reach if required it was all one could wish.

³⁹One Arrow, chief of the Swamp Crees, situated near Batoche, retained close touch with the Métis, and later joined the Rebellion. He received three years for his participation in the Rebellion.

General went with main body of Boulton's scouts. I saw whole column leave camp and then joined him.

Left camp standing—took every available man with us—hardly anyone left in camp. But camp perfectly safe place.

Heard firing on steamer and whistling at about 8 a.m., and at about same time trail joined Gabriel's trail close to river. Fired a shot with one of our guns (which were still with the column) to let steamer know of our advance. Sent back and got A Battery up to front with the scouts, and shelled houses on Gabriel's trail (suburbs of Batoche). Infantry very slow in coming on. Got them up at last, and advanced towards R.C. Church and what proved to be priests' house.

Howard, an American officer in charge of Gatling (he had been sent with it by the makers as instructor) had already fired at priests' house with the Gatling, and a priest had shown himself. He was anxious to fire again, saying the priest had no business there, but General would not let him, and on going cautiously up to house we found that it contained some nuns, priests (about 4 or 5) and some breed women and children. Up to this time there had been very little, or indeed no fire from rebels.

There is an open space in front of church and priests' house, the trail passes between this space and the river bank, which is very high (150 feet perhaps) and steep, covered with thick bush. Immediately behind the church and priests' house the bush again commences, and a little further on the ground falls rapidly into a hollow, in the centre of which, in open ground, we could see Batoche House, and some other buildings, one of which we were told was the Council house. We fired one or two shots at these from the edge of the open ground near priests' house, and then moved the guns off the trail, down on to the steep bank for a short distance, which gave us a better view of the houses, and fired from there. The Council house about 800 yards range. Guns did not make good practice. We had with us the two guns of A Battery and the Gatling.

At this time the infantry were covering our right front and right [flank]; one of them came to me and told me they had been fired on from a pit on right front. I told the General. The bush was low where the guns were firing, but close up to their right it was high and thick. Suddenly there was a loud war whoop of many voices close up to the guns, but nearest to the right hand gun, and there was a fall back on our part to the trail and open ground above us, but Howard with his Gatling stood fast, and rattled a volley right into the bush in front of him, after which there was not a sound. It was a ticklish moment, and Howard did well, as he did all day.

After this the action resembled Fish Creek, viz. our men lying down in the bush, firing at, and being fired on by the rebels in pits from behind thick cover. The position of our men remained much the same all day, viz. French's Scouts low down on our left on river bank, dismounted artillery lining crest of bank above place where the attack on guns had been made, one Comp.? of the 10th.

lying down in bush to our immediate front, and firing on rebels at short range, and another Compy. of 10th. in support. Boulton's Mounted Infantry still protecting our right front and right. One Compy. of the 90th. on our left, on top of river bank, the Midland Battn. in reserve, and near the houses of the suburbs we had first shelled. Ammunition waggons in small hollow near the church, ambulance and spare waggons near reserve on trail.

Rebels immediately in front of 10th. apparently in a pit. Tried to dislodge them with Gatling, and also with guns firing from rear over our men's heads (went too near our own men, not advisable with unskilled gunner). Howard also had Gatling down river bank, close to where rush had been made on guns, but had to come back, on account of hot fire.

Enemy slightly pushed back our left, and lighted bush fire on our right front, behind smoke of which we expected them to advance, and in afternoon, things looking awkward, we got wounded out of church into waggons, and had ordered them to fall back to camp. I found that the ammunition waggons were also retiring, and I stopped them, much to Disbrow's⁴⁰ relief, who was in charge of them, and had done well all day.

There was a disagreeable fire most of the day from the other side of the river, where the banks are also high, except close to the ferry. There was a large Indian Camp, and what appeared to be a large stone house close to the ferry on the other side.

We had one man killed (an A Battery man) and seven wounded.

Howard before the fight had said that he knew the Sioux Indians were possessed of an American officer's sword, which they had taken in some of the Sioux fights in the States. He picked up the sword after one of the scrimmages at Batoche on the 9th. It had been shortened the length of a hunting knife, but the hilt still showed what it was.

[V.] [*Transport and Supply*]

Captain Bedson: Chief Transport Officer (Late 18th. Regt.)

Secretan: Assistant Transport Officer.

Underwood: Commt. Officer (Late [Regular Army] Regt.)

All transport engaged by Hudson Bay Co., and all supplies purchased by them. They receive 5% commission. (We got some hay from Winnipeg on march, also cattle after Fish Creek).

Transport entirely light four-wheeled waggons, with two horses, and latterly a certain number of ox teams. A team means a pair. Each cart a load of "30 x 100 lbs." = about 1½ tons. Original price 10\$ a team per day, but latterly hired at cheaper rate, but high rate held good with those originally hired.

H.B. Co. largely employed contractors, who engaged teams at much cheaper rates. I strongly advised Mr. Caron to cancel original agreement, and engage

⁴⁰Lieut. W. H. Disbrow, a supernumerary officer of the Winnipeg Cavalry.

teams by an agent of his own, or at any rate without middleman. H.B. Co. most useful in first emergency, but if the campaign had continued unnecessary to continue paying them at original high rates.

A certain amount of discontent occasioned, and unnecessary expense incurred by engagement of 68 teams from Dakota.

About 25 to 30 tons a day would supply camp on May 9th.

A certain number of teamsters were armed. Transport never had escort, except after Fish Creek, when we sent escort with carts to bring in hay. But large convoys of many waggons always came without escort. Possibly up to Humboldt, where troops were stationed along line, escorts may have been occasionally supplied when asked for.

Transport was formed into: Right Division, Centre [Division], Left [Division], Another Division (called Extra Division?) These subdivided into Subdivisions of ten carts under a Head Teamster.

Line of communication divided into posts, with depot in charge of depot clerk at each.

Telegraph Station at every other post.

Certain teams worked between certain posts, so that the same teams did not go the whole way through. Starting from base with 100 teams 10 would be dropped at depot for supply of that 100, the depot etc., and 90 would go on, to be again reduced at next post, so that only reduced number of original 100 would get to camp.

No convoy of ours was ever attacked.

Hardly ever necessary to carry firewood, except two days march Salt Plain, and one day between Humboldt and Clark's Crossing.

No difficulty as to water.

Horses first rate, showing a good deal of quality. Horses from Bell Farm especially good.

Ox Teams only working latterly, and feet showed signs of giving way with hard ground. Collars used with oxen (not yokes) apparently answer well.

Grass beginning to grow latterly, but practically was of no use as food. Horse feed per day Oats 40 lbs., Hay 30 lbs. per team.

No one was allowed to give any order to teamsters except their own transport officers. We found it absolutely necessary to strictly enforce this. Order of march for transport was usually: Ammunition Waggons, carrying small red flag each, Ambulance and Hospital Stores, Hd. Qrs. Staff's Baggage, Scouts Baggage, Regimental Baggage, Transport. Position of Ambulance and Medical Stores was changed occasionally in column, but latterly near head of transport column appeared best place for it.

Had no baggage guard, and rear guard (French's Scouts) only after leaving Fish Creek Camp.

After Fish Creek 100 yards between Ammunition Waggon and head of transport column. Teams marched in single file, and latterly, when trail admitted it, in double rank. Teams were laged and horses unhitched at mid-day halt as well as at night.

First night we camped tried forming waggon in parallel lines perpendicular to front, in rear of camp. [Diagram deleted] Afterwards tried making waggon into circle and placing camp inside, and also tried horse shoe formation, with camp across gorge of shoe, but finally discarded for a complete "corall" [coral] of waggon, completely closed, with teamsters tents, and horses inside the corall. Corall was formed at mid-day halt as at night. Officers were continually breaking coral by removing waggon to their camp to unload officers' baggage. Had to insist on order being obeyed against this. Head Quarters waggon were kept separate and posted behind Head Quarters camp. Ammunition waggon were originally part of lager, but latterly were removed, and posted behind artillery camp.

Camps

I went on in front of column and marked out all camps till Haig took duties of A.Q.M.G. but then I also found it necessary to see to it. [Diagram of camp as formed at Fish Creek and a small graphic illustration deleted] Tents were pitched very close. Interval of 10 yards between regimental camps. Roughly a front of 250 yards and Depth 150 up to front of lager. Size of lager depended on number of waggon.

No pickets were placed till some days after leaving Fort Qu'Appelle. After that number of pickets as seemed necessary, also rear guard of 18 men under an officer close to rear of lager.

Pickets posted at retreat generally till after Fish Creek, where pickets were placed immediately after fight and we kept sentries on line of pickets on all day, but during day they are relieved from camp.

Pickets at Fish Creek were too strong, owing to their having been placed immediately after fight, more as strong guards to camp, rather than usual picket arrangement. Straubenzie altered arrangement on his arrival. Before Fish Creek we always withdrew our pickets during the day.

Mounted Corps formed mounted patrols who patrolled outside pickets during night.

At Fish Creek we had four pickets and the rear guard, but they were not told off as separate pickets, but companies found them, the company officers dividing the posts amongst them. Endeavoured to take up ground for pickets with a guard in marching into camp, but found it difficult to enforce rule, and not much real necessity for pickets till after Humboldt.

F. Officer of the day had charge of pickets, but General or I always superintended placing of them, and one of us (after Fish Creek), very often both of us, went rounds at night.

Ammunition

This was placed in charge of artillery, and latterly was packed in rear of their camp, and given into charge of an officer. At first regts. were supposed to look after their own, but found it best to place it under one control. Before Batoche we had about 140 rounds per man, and a reserve of 250 per man. At Batoche, on the 9th. May the men carried as near 100 rounds as they could, but their equipment was bad, and it was difficult for them to carry them.

Men all armed with Sniders, except 50 men who had M.H. Rifles, Boulton's men Winchester, carrying 10 rounds each, and French's Scouts a mixture of arms, Winchester, Peabodies, Sniders.

[List of staff and commanding officers deleted]

French had no rank in Canadian Militia but had been a Captain in Irish Militia, and had also served in Mtd. Police. His men got 5\$ a day and found their own horses.

Pay. All men got 50 cts. a day except Boulton's men who got 75 cts. and French's men.

[Tabulation of distances marched omitted]

Contributors

CARMAN MILLER is a Professor of History at McGill University.

RUTH M. BUCK, of Regina, is a daughter of the Rev. J. R. Matheson.

J. A. WEDGWOOD is Director of Planning, University of Saskatchewan.

The Journal of Eleanor Sheppherd Matheson, 1920

Part II

THE PAS TO LAC LA RONGE, AND RETURN BY CANOE

AUGUST 23: Got up about 6 a.m. Had service at 10. Such a wonderful congregation. Church was literally packed, and there were 126 communicants . . . The service occupied 2 hours and 40 minutes. Archdeacon preached, Edward helping. After the service all the W.A.¹ members remained (about 40) and we had a W.A. meeting which lasted an hour or a little more . . .

AUGUST 24: . . . As soon as dinner was over, our W.A. friends began to arrive with their little ones . . . I enrolled 44 Little Helpers, and there are more to follow . . .

AUGUST 25: . . . Quite a number of women came in the afternoon and I enrolled 6 more babies, making 50 in all. Had service again at 6.30, but not quite so large a congregation as quite a number had left already for winter hunting grounds . . .

AUGUST 26: We will strike camp at 11.15 and go as far as the Hudson's Bay Company Post before dinner.

Several came to say good-bye and among them was Chief Joseph Charles. When he said good-bye to me, he held my hand, while the Archdeacon interpreted what he had to say. He said they were all so glad when they heard I was coming, and were so very pleased to see me, the meeting had been most pleasant and helpful to them all; they had heard of me for years and were rejoiced to see me face to face. When they heard that I was coming they prayed God to bring us in safety, and now that we were leaving they would pray God to take us home safely and give us journeying mercies.

I surely was most deeply touched. He also spoke beautifully to the Archdeacon and Edward when he said good-bye to them. It was all said as one who is invoking a blessing on others . . .

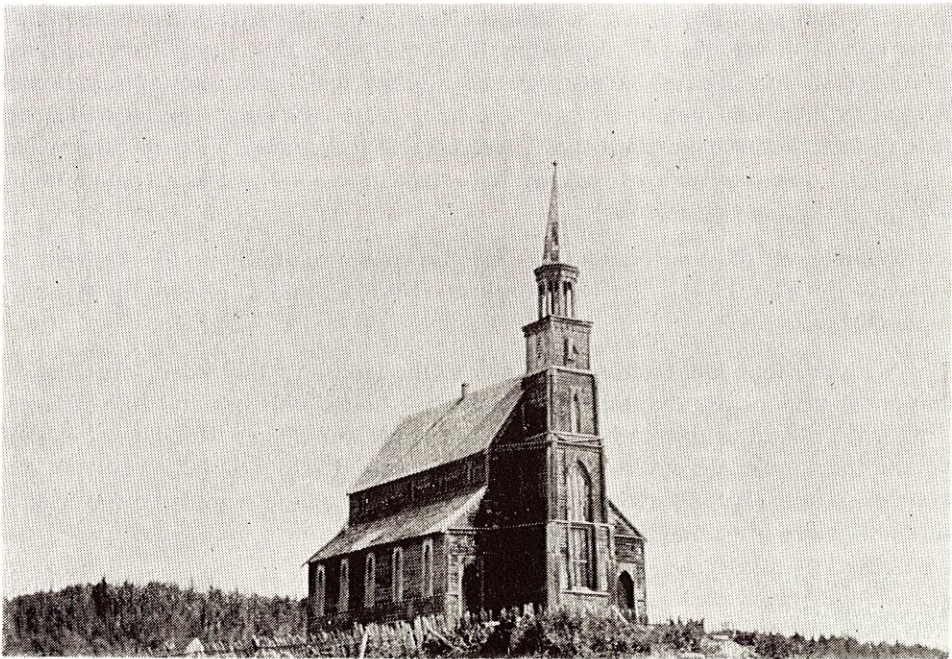
We went four miles across the Lake to the Hudson's Bay Post. Mrs. McKay was most kind to us, and we spent 3 pleasant hours with her and her children. They have a fine garden and we surely did enjoy our dinner with three kinds of vegetables . . . Archdeacon made his purchases and at 2.20 p.m. left—really on our home-ward way. We are about 390 miles from home although we have traversed a thousand miles in coming here.

As we pulled out from the Hudson's Bay Company Post, they fired a salute in our honour . . .

¹Mrs. Matheson was Diocesan President, Woman's Auxiliary to the Missionary Society, from 1911 until 1922.



Meeting of the Women's Auxiliary at Lac la Ronge on August 25, 1920.



Holy Trinity Church, Stanley.

Went along for about 12 miles and at 5 p.m. camped on an end of an island, which we named "Pemmican Point" . . .

AUGUST 27: . . . Very soon we came into the "Wide Traverse" or "Crossing" [Nut Point] It took us about $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours to cross . . .

At 1.09 p.m. we came to our first portage and we walked over it. It must have been half a mile. Then we crossed a lake [Stroud], a mile, across to the next portage. It was half a mile across also. Both were through woodland paths . . .

Then we came to a portage where the creek was dammed up, as part of it was full of rocks . . . When we came to the first of these 4 portages, we left Lac la Ronge, the north-east corner. The mission is at the north-west corner . . .

AUGUST 28. Up at 5.30, had a good breakfast, bacon, eggs, etc. and started off on our last stage to Stanley. In $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour we came to our 4th and last portage. . . .

The lake [Hunt] between these two portages was about 15 miles long, and most beautiful . . . We had our last portage at 8.40 a.m. and started down a creek which runs into the Churchill River. At one time, the Archdeacon thought of building a saw mill here for Stanley Mission . . .²

As soon as we rounded the point where the church, mission house and village stand there was a great firing of salutes.³ Mr. and Mrs. Morris gave us a most warm and cordial welcome and we felt at home at once. Many came to greet us as we landed and gave us warm handshakes. Mrs. Morris gave us a cup of delicious tea and later a most sumptuous dinner. For the first time in almost three weeks we sat down in proper civilized fashion . . .

[SUNDAY] AUGUST 29: Had an early celebration which was a corporate Communion service for the W.A. . . . After a good breakfast at the mission house, we had another service with the celebration of Holy Communion . . . At 3.00 p.m. we had another service, and every seat full . . . After service, Mrs. Morris, Dorcas and I went back to the church and spent some time there . . .

It is a most beautiful old church, ecclesiastical in every way—chancel, east window, Communion rail, pillars and everything all one could desire—fine old pews and kneeling benches made by the Archdeacon himself many, many years

²The Rev. J. A. Mackay was appointed to Stanley Mission in 1865. Besides teaching and preaching, he established a farm, with fifteen acres under cultivation, where he grew wheat, had it harvested and threshed by sickle and flail; and had millstones to grind flour. He kept cattle so that he could have fresh milk and butter, and grew a good garden. Here he also set up a printing press, as he had learned under Bishop Hordern at Moose Factory, to print and bind his own translations from English into Cree. The Cree Bible, Prayer Book and Hymn Book are largely his work.

³M. W. 1967. Main settlement is now across the river. Services are held in the new community hall. From the far shore, the church seems to stand alone on a high rock clearing. There are some cabins to the rear, scattered in the bush, but in such condition that it would be debatable whether they could be used or not. The weed-growth around the church is unchecked, the wooden crosses in need of paint and repair. The church itself seems in excellent shape. The stove and pipes have been removed, and it is only in the summer that the church is occasionally used.

ago. It is 56 years since he first came to Stanley, and 55 since he came as missionary in charge. He was there for ten years at that time. He made the first stove pipes for the church out of sheet iron and the sort of chimney that he made out of the same material still stands and seems as good as ever. The church has been badly out of repair, but Mr. Brown did the inside and Mr. Morris is having the outside done. All the lower part has had fresh boards put on it and has been painted and if all is well, the upper part will be done next year and the painting completed. The steeple badly needs new tin.

The church is most beautifully situated and stands well out on a point of land where the river takes a turn . . . The windows are long and narrow, and are all of rich coloured stained glass. Mrs. Trivett, the wife of one of the early missionaries, is buried beneath the chancel floor. Several tablets adorn the walls, and as you enter you feel that you are in an old and historic church . . .

There have been several mission houses, the main part of the present one was built in Canon McLennan's time. Rev. James Brown raised it and built an upstairs and added a kitchen also. Rev. M. B. Edwards added a large room built on for a study; but it is a poor old place, and a new house badly needed and is to be built as soon as lumber and materials can be bought.

AUGUST 30: Got up at 5.30, dressed, and then packed all our goods and chattels, had an early breakfast, saw some people, and then had a service at 8.30 . . .

A large number came down to the river to say good-bye . . . As we pulled out, the church bell was rung, and until we turned a sharp point three quarters of a mile away, salutes were fired, and hats waved. Little Mrs. Morris had tears in her eyes, but her hat was in the air, being waved until we were lost to sight . . .

About 4 miles down the Churchill we made our first portage at Board [South Stanley] Rapids, had our dinner there, and came on to Rabbit [North Stanley] Rapids. Our men did not take us up to see them. Board Rapids got its name from a memorial board which was put up there in memory of two young men who lost their lives in the rapids.

We had it rather tough in the afternoon, so we camped for the night at Sandy Ridge Portage [Potter or Drinking Falls] where the rapids are simply magnificent.

AUGUST 31: . . . There was a wee bit of rapids, a few hundred yards from the grand ones which we ran. Head wind again today. We came to a small rapids just a few miles on again, then a fairly good one which we ran. Not far from these we came to Island Rapids, where we had to portage on our way out, but this time we turned to the left and ran a small rapids which took us into "Little River" [Inman Channel] which we missed on our way up. It is really cold on the water this morning.

Coming out of the Little River [Inman Channel] into the Churchill [Keg Lake] again there was a very pretty rapids about 10 or 15 yards wide. Here we had to make a portage . . . We ran a small rapids and at 11.00 reached Keg Rapids. There we had to make a portage, which took 35 minutes. Just below we ran another short rapids . . .

We then ran quite a long rapids and came to Mountain [Grand] Portage. The rapids here are fine, with their dashing, foaming water breaking over huge rocks. After portaging the main rapids, we ran quite a length of it, where there are great swirling eddies . . .

We came over a long wide open space of the Churchill, [Trade Lake] which took us over 3 hours. I helped to paddle, or tried to at least. Arrived at Frog Portage soon after 6 p.m. and camped for the night . . .

SEPTEMBER 1: Got up at five and left at 6. On leaving Frog Portage you enter a creek or slough full of reeds and lily pads [Lindstrom Lake]. You go along this about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles when you come to Little Frog Portage. Here we had to make a short portage as the water had fallen since we came up . . . The Frog Portage got its name from the Cree Indians stretching a frog-skin on a stick and putting it up there in the face of their enemies, the Chipweyans, to show their contempt of them. Later the Crees drove them back to the far north . . .

After making Little Frog Portage we came through the creek for a couple of miles and were then out in Burnt Woods [Wood] Lake . . .

Very soon we came to the first of the 4 portages and rapids in our homeward way going east. The first was not much, very short, and canoes easily lifted over. The next, one hundred yards away was the 2nd—a very pretty one, the rapids divided in the centre by huge rocks . . . The men brought the canoes down the left side, a very narrow and tortuous sort of place.

The 3rd portage and rapids were about a couple of hundred yards from the 2nd. The men had to bring the canoes over and portage everything . . .

The 4th [Medicine] Rapids we ran were very pretty and afforded a few moments of excitement. They opened out into a pretty little dell, and then we were on Pelican Narrows Lake . . . We saw two fires as soon as we got into the lake.

We came to Pelican Narrows village at 5.40 and were warmly welcomed by Mr. Symonds of Reveillon Freres. We again camped on his grounds and had lots of nice dry hay for our beds, also some modern conveniences . . .

SEPTEMBER 2: Service at 9.30 a.m. After saying good-bye to all who were at the service, we went to Reveillon's Post and talked to Mr. Symonds for a time. Then had dinner, gathered up our small wash we had done early in the morning, and packed . . . We left at 2.35 and were soon down to the Straits or Narrows.⁴ The first entrance⁵ to the Narrows was about 25 yards [wide]. It was a mile and then

⁴The narrows or strait is called by the Indians "Opawikoschikun" or "The Dreaded Strait", and the tradition is that, long ago, it was a favorite place for Indians to waylay their enemies passing in canoes, as the strait is an easy bowshot across. An ambush was always dreaded there.

⁵M. W. 1967. A bridge now crosses this entrance to the Narrows; and a newly constructed road has been opened to traffic from the south. The town has its own power plant, and water and sewer lines were being laid. There are new, freshly painted houses, but many of the older dwellings would seem utterly unfit for human habitation. Reveillon Freres were bought out by the Hudson's Bay Company; and, as in all these northern settlements, that store is the gathering place and welcoming centre. It seemed strange, however, to find it a self-serve market, with shopping carts and vending machines.

the other entrance of about 20 yards. After this we were out in the wide open [Mirond] lake again, for although there are innumerable islands, there are wide stretches of water . . .

SEPTEMBER 3: . . . As soon as we started out a heavy mist fell and we could not see an island or a rock until a few yards away. We got lost and many times had to turn back and find another way, as the way and everything else was enshrouded in "mist-ray", a new word I have coined as suitable to the occasion. Although a warm morning really, yet the dampness had such a chill in it that we felt it in our bones. As I have had a nasty cold for some days, have felt this more than the others.

It certainly did seem very strange hunting the various channels of Pelican Narrows [Mirond] Lake by sound. We kept stopping to listen for the sound of Rock [Corneille] Rapids, and were very glad when we heard the roar of them, and at last found our way out of that part of the lake. Soon after, the sun got a little more power and very gradually the heavy mist . . . began to lift.

The Dog Rapids which we came to about 10 a.m. has a rocky little island in the centre which we walked over. The men brought the canoes over the rocks also, but part way by water, then a lift, and a slide over rollers into the lake. A few yards from there we camped for breakfast, and right hungry we were . . .

We were now in Birch Lake [Upper Sturgeon River] and at 2 p.m. reached Birch Portage, where we saw the Custer family and the Archdeacon was successful in getting tea and whitefish. We camped a few yards from the south end of the portage and had our dinner . . .

Now we are in Pine [Sturgeon] River again. Halfway between Birch Rapids and Leaf Rapids we ran the Little Island Rapids,⁶ a lovely little rapid, swift but short. At Leafy Rapids, the men ran the canoes through, but we had to get out and walk over Leafy Portage, a pretty but short walk. The canoes shipped some water and we had a rather amusing episode that Edward called "a stern reality".

About 5.15 we came to the Scoop Rapids where the Archdeacon and I tried some fishing—no success. We could not find a clean camp on the portage, as it is used so much by passers to and fro, so we came down the river a little over a mile and found a most lovely place to camp for the night, nice even ground and no rocks to wind around . . .

SEPTEMBER 4: . . . At 10.15 we came to Snake Portage. We do not see the rapids here at all, although they are quite long. It took us 26½ minutes to saunter over this lovely portage, by an unusually good path. The men took the canoes with their load up a creek⁷ and so save a long portage. Soon after we ran a short

⁶M. W. 1967. Now Mile 190 on the Hanson Lake Road, and the rapids are known as Leafy Rapids. A bridge crosses them. The island divides them and the left channel can be run safely.

⁷M. W. 1967. Unable to find this creek and had to carry canoe. Portage very overgrown but not difficult except for length of 1050 yards. Had to make two trips across, totalling one hour and ten minutes, clocked to compare to those "26½ minutes to saunter". We were sweaty and breathing hard, but pleased with ourselves.



The passengers in the canoe on the left are Miss Halson and Archdeacon Mackay. Canon and Mrs. Matheson are the passengers in the canoe on the right. The canoeists have not been individually identified but their names were Louis and Robert MacGillivray, Henry Wilson and Henry Bloomfield.

but swift little rapids and half a mile below it another tiny one. Then we called at Thomas Seewop's and got some potatoes and fish. They are finishing quite a swell house,⁸ with a pergola and lattice door to enter it, also have a wide platform nearly around the house. The small pillars used are mostly beautifully done.

About a mile from there we came to the Pine [Spruce] Rapids. Our men portaged their canoe, but the Archdeacon's ran their's down the rapids, a strong and rocky one . . .

A couple of miles from here we camped for dinner, just opposite John Custer's who visited with us. Left there at 2.40. There is quite a little settlement⁹ here at the mouth of the Pine [Sturgeon] River. Just before 3 p.m. we came to Beaver [Amisk] Lake. It was very rough, a big sea on. For a few miles the men paddled hard against the wind but for nearly 3 hours we sailed over very rough water. It was a side wind, with choppy seas that were difficult for the canoes . . .

As we passed Beaver City at the end of the lake, all was quiet, but I counted 26 dogs, guarding the water front. A man lives here who boards trappers 'and others' train dogs at \$2.50 a month. Just here we entered the [Lower] Sturgeon River by what is called End Rapids. This, like all the rapids in "the Evil River"—a most true name—is over huge rocks, all of which have corrugated or deeply

⁸M. W. 1967. Only a distinct clearing remains, without any evidence of the house.

⁹M. W. 1967. There is no settlement here now.

honey-combed tops, and when the water is very low, as it is now—in fact, the very lowest for many, many years—it is extremely risky for canoes . . .¹⁰

One mile from them we came to Crooked Rapids, a most tortuous and winding one, quite 2 miles. Soon we came to another short rapids and struck our canoe pretty heavily on a rock. No sooner escaped that than we ran right on another. Well for us the water was not very swift there. A short distance and we were on another. A few minutes more brought us to Queensberry Portage and Queensberry Rapids. They were very long and rather winding. Got through all right. Half a mile or so, then another; a short way, then another, both of which we went through nicely . . . A $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile below we came to our Sunday Camp grounds. It was 8 a.m. . . .

SEPTEMBER 6: . . . We have been coming through a succession of rapids of the most winding and serpentine kind. One minute on one side of the river, then carefully pushing through the great sharp rocks to the other side. At 11.10 ran the Rat Rapids. We had to portage on the way up. Some lovely wide stretches of river here and nicely wooded banks, trees all so green. A little over a mile and we came to "Second Portage" and "Second Rapids". We ran rapids, a big drop here and rocks very bad. We hung on one and scraped badly on others. About $\frac{1}{2}$ mile or so, we came to "First Rapids" (above Sturgeon Landing). The drops are pretty deep, waters swift, but very shallow. We got stuck two or three times and once pretty well tipped over. Scraped the canoe badly . . .

We were wind-bound and had to camp at the mouth of "The Evil River" all the rest of that day and night. A heavy sea was on. We called this camp "Storm-stayed Point". Had a big fire on the shore at night though, but it was really too warm for a fire.

SEPTEMBER 7: . . . The men paddled a little way and then sailed about 20 miles. At 8.20 we stopped for breakfast . . . and [then] sailed for 3 hours and 40 minutes. Must have sailed over twenty miles. Our first lake to sail over was Sturgeon [Namew] Lake, then we came through a narrows into Partridge Crop Lake. Both lakes have very wide open crossing.

Came through another narrows [Whitey] and stopped at Budd's Point to see some people. Such a nice clean house, and lots of horses and cattle about. At 4.15 we set off across Cumberland Lake, to go to the Mission to see the Rev. J. R. Settee¹¹ who has been very ill. About 6 we got to the nearest spot at which we could land, near the church and mission house. It was a horrible mud bay landing,¹² but we had a nice spot to camp, in what we called "The Willows". By

¹⁰M. W. 1967. The Lower Sturgeon-Weir drops 92 feet in the twenty-five miles from Amisk to Namew; and on the way up, Mrs. Matheson had counted 24 rapids before they reached End Rapids.

¹¹Son of James Settee, who founded the mission at Lac la Ronge in 1845.

¹²M. W. 1967. A powerful electric light is a beacon for late comers to Cumberland House, but the approach is better made in day light. Crew of "Samuel Hearne" reached the Bigstone River about midnight, and clambered up the high mud banks in the dark, to camp in a small clearing in the willows. In the morning paddled to the low shoreline of Cumberland House. Hauled the canoe through the marsh to the old Hudson's Bay Company dock; then there were several miles of cramped paddling before the water was deep enough to continue normally, down Tearing River.

the time we had our tents up and our supper cooked and eaten, it was too late and too dark to walk to the mission house, two miles away. Had our usual fire, and after prayers, we sat around it, but in rather a pensive mood.

SEPTEMBER 8: . . . At 8.20 started off on our 2 mile walk to see Rev. J. R. Settee and his wife. It was a rough walk through thickets of willow and across half-baked mud flats. Mr. Settee has been and still is very ill, but very bright and cheerful . . . we started our homeward walk, got lost in a thicket of willows, which increased our dodging under and over brush. It was very hot and we were all tired . . .

After the end of two hours we ran through 3 more rapids and left the Tearing River, and came into the Saskatchewan again . . .

After more than 4 hours paddling from Cumberland, we take a very big turn in the river, and in distance we see the houses and white tents of The Barrier, a lovely peaceful scene.

Joe Chamberlain teaches here. We pulled in to see him decided to camp here for the night as it is very difficult to get a good camp on the muddy banks of the Saskatchewan, especially now when the water is so low . . .

SEPTEMBER 9: . . . Left at 5.40 on our last day's water journey. The Saskatchewan River takes a big turn soon after leaving The Barrier and you go around it for 18 miles at the end of that time find yourselves exactly opposite where you started from, but two miles apart in width. You can make a portage, but it is through two miles of lake, muskeg and general misery. Women could not do it, nor can the men carry much at a time over it.

At 9 we camped for breakfast, and had bacon, eggs, fried potatoes, and marmalade. At 10.15 we started off again, on the last 20 miles of our journey. By the winter road it is only 48 or 50 miles from Cumberland House to The Mackay School, but now when the water is low, you have to go so far around even with canoes, that it is over 70 miles. At one place we could see the Big Eddy Point very clearly, then you go around turns for miles and lose sight of it altogether. All four of our canoeemen live at the Big Eddy, so they welcomed the sight of it.

At 3 p.m. we camped on the shore, in the muddiest place yet and had fried duck, onions and potatoes. We proposed several toasts, as this was the last meal of our trip. One to "Our Archdeacon, God Bless him"; one to "The Tea-maker", who is Edward; one to "The Dish-washer, Potato-boiler, and Dish-wiper", which included Dorcas and myself; and then one to "The Entertainer".¹³

We left this spot at 4.30 and started on the last two miles of the Saskatchewan River . . . Reached the mouth of the creek, 2 miles from the school at 5 p.m. Here we unloaded our baggage, as the water had fallen about 8 or 10 feet at least, and what had been a river when we left was now a dirty, muddy, shallow creek. Edward went to the hayfield and found Mr. Grant and the boys there, so Mr. Grant put off his load of hay and took ourselves and luggage over two miles of awful roads to the School. We arrived there at 6 p.m. in good time for tea . . .

¹³Eleanor Matheson herself—for her gentle and unflinching sense of humor, her fund of delightful stories.

Book Reviews

SASKATCHEWAN. By Edward McCourt. Toronto: Macmillan, 1968. Pp. 238. Illus. \$6.50.

"IT IS MY hope that this book may help the visitor to Saskatchewan to choose roads to travel over, places to visit, and things to see that will most effectively acquaint him with the nature and variety of the land and with the history and character of its people."

Edward McCourt in *Saskatchewan* has admirably met his objective. The book is a wide-ranging description of the Province and its people that should be rewarding and entertaining reading for resident and non-resident alike, be he a traveller or not.

Historical and geographical outlines set the framework. Given are a summary of the archeological findings, such of the Indian story as is known, the age of the fur traders, the Métis, the first settlers and the great drought. The environment which influences the people is portrayed: the cold and heat, the wind and dust, the far horizons and the quiet autumn haze. These two introductory chapters set the pace. They are lively and rich in visual description. They range from political theory to the effects of using outdoor plumbing in winter, and are interlaced with anecdote, quotation and comment on the contemporary scene.

The visitor starts in southeastern Saskatchewan, is taken through the plains to the Cypress Hills, then guided into the parklands from the Qu'Appelle Valley to the Yorkton district (with one of the best accounts of ethnic settlement I have seen) and to Lloydminster. After a trip through the northern farming regions the visitor is led into the boreal forests and the Precambrian Shield as far as roads penetrate. On this tour McCourt points out a great number and variety of points of interest, all the while giving the history or relating the scene to the people, the land and the climate. He intersperses his own experiences and offers suggestions to aid the visitor.

For one who perceives, Saskatchewan is a land of contrasts which a book on the Province should reflect. McCourt's spectrum of topics certainly does: from a dying prairie hamlet to the respectable architecture of Regina's public buildings, from University research to a baseball player lost in a dust storm, from the Ku Klux Klan to the legend of Qu'Appelle, from lovely vistas in the Pasquai Hills to sleepy Esterhazy adjusting to a pulsing potash industry, from early-day courtship to exotic flora in the Cypress Hills, from Riel justice to a picnic, from living conditions of the natives to "hunters in the north woods shooting deer and moose and frequently each other"—the combination of sudden turn and commentary makes the book a delight to read.

Standing out is McCourt's considerable talent to see, to feel and to express. His observations on his fellow residents are telling, often humorous, yet made with friendly understanding. He writes of places as he found them—where accommodations are inadequate, where the road is bad, where the scenery is monotonous, he says so (this approach alone lifts the book above the ordinary travel guide).

In this sort of book there is bound to be some unevenness in subject treatment, yet there is a surprising continuity. Two districts are left out. There is nothing about the West Central part of the Province—mention might have been made of the lonely, starkly beautiful Great Sand Hills and of the big grain farms and famous goose hunting areas in the Kindersley district. McCourt's not illogical assumption that the visitor will be driving means that the northern half of the Province is ignored.

Emerging from his writing about prairie and parkland is McCourt himself. One feels that he understands and has an attachment for his country, that he belongs with the people living in the big spaces and molded by a sometimes harsh environment. One's reaction to the part on the forest is different. There, although still discerning and perceptive about what he sees, the depth of feeling and intimacy is missing. The familiarity in the way he writes of fleeting images of prairie crocuses on a hillside, sunsets over Saskatoon, frost on a wire is not present in the corresponding detail about the North. One senses that he feels he is a foreigner in a forest. Yet, when he says as much, one is not sure that he should be taken seriously, "I think, though, that I can muster some evidence to support my view that a forest environment is not only physically oppressive, but mentally inhibiting."

The goings-on in a Montana brothel, the Boer War and an account of Grey Owl on the lecture circuit in England hardly belong in a traveller's reference on Saskatchewan. Yet these and other wanderings are not amiss, rounding out as they do McCourt's accounts of local happenings.

A trifle less on history and a little more on the contemporary scene might have yielded a better balance, but this is personal taste. McCourt could have made more interesting the traveller's long miles through the all-enveloping farm land if he had drawn attention to the clues offered by the fields and buildings and villages. What one sees in the fields reveals the effects of changing soil types and climate and variations in farming methods from one district to another. This is pointed out for the Tisdale district but is largely overlooked elsewhere. Similarly, the style of farm-house—the Ontario house in the Tessier district, the Ukrainian house in the Hafford area—reveal the places of origin of the settlers; and the characteristics of the town invariably relate to the surrounding agricultural industry and to communication.

I read the book after having just retraced the old Fort Walsh police trail from Eastend to Wood Mountain. Mixed feelings resulted. I was crestfallen over what I had missed seeing; I gained much respect for Edward McCourt's impressive powers of observation and great curiosity about the story behind what he sees. That the book can add considerable enrichment and pleasure to a trip was clearly demonstrated. The publisher notes that *Saskatchewan* is the first in a series of travel books about Canada. If the four in preparation are the calibre of this one, the collection will be an excellent one.

J. A. WEDGWOOD

SASKATCHEWAN AND THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS. By The Earl of Southesk. With an introduction to the new edition by L. G. Thomas. Edmonton: M. G. Hurtig Ltd. 1969. Pp. 486. Illus. Maps. \$5.95.

THIS CLASSIC OF western travel was first published in 1875 by Edmonton and Douglas, Edinburgh, with the subtitle: *A Diary and Narrative of Travel, Sport, and Adventure, During A Journey Through the Hudson's Bay Company's Territories, in 1859 and 1860.*

The new edition has been printed in Japan by a photostat process which reproduces the original book with its illustrations and maps, its preface and table of contents, its index and appendix; and does all this at a reasonable price for students of western history who might know the book otherwise only through references to it.

In his own preface, Southesk says that "the foundation of this book is a very carefully kept journal, for the most part noted down evening by evening over the camp fire, and none of it written, save a sentence or two, at intervals of more than a few days after the occurrences it relates". One hundred years later, the reader shares reactions to all the varied incidents of a long and most difficult journey that Southesk took solely for his own diversion. Yet he was a penetrating observer, and Sanford Fleming found the book useful in his survey for the Canadian Pacific Railway. In the introduction to the new edition, Professor L. G. Thomas of the University of Alberta places the account of the journey in its context of western history.

RUTH M. BUCK

Notes and Correspondence

The Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society met at Yorkton on August 23rd and 24th. The meeting heard reports from its various committees and elected officers. The executive for 1969-70 is Mrs. I. Eaglesham of Weyburn, president; A. Seivewright of Regina, vice-president; M. B. Banting of Craik, secretary-treasurer. On display at the conference were photographs of early homes, pottery made by an early Ukrainian potter and a set of albums showing the history of Yorkton in pictures, compiled by Howard Jackson, former city clerk. The main speaker was R. H. Macdonald who discussed the problems involved in publishing Western Canadian History.

The Pioneer West is the title chosen by the Historical Society of Alberta for a special publication. It is a reprint of articles from the first two issues of the *Alberta Historical Review* originally published in mimeographed form in 1953. Illustrations have been added in this new printing. The society plans to reprint all the articles from the mimeographed issues of 1953 to 1955. *The Pioneer West* may be obtained at a cost of \$1.00 by writing to the following address: Historical Society of Alberta, 3213-34th Ave S.W., Calgary, Alberta.

BACK ISSUES OF

Saskatchewan History

AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

Copies of most of the previous numbers of this magazine are still available for your reading enjoyment.

Issues available are:

Vol. I, No. 1; Vol. III, Nos. 2 and 3; Vol. IV, No. 1; Vols. VIII, IX, X (3 issues each); Vol. XI, Nos. 1 and 3; Vols. XII, XIII, XIV (3 issues each); Vol. XV, Nos. 2 and 3; Vols. XVI to Vol. XVII (3 issues each).

Price: 35c per issue.

Vols. XVIII to XXI (3 issues each). Price: 50c per issue.

Cost of all available back issues to end of 1968: \$17.20.

Send to:

SASKATCHEWAN HISTORY
Archives Office
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Sask.

