



The March West starts from Fort Dufferin.

tlers were taken as hostages. When one of these hostages was executed, the prime minister responded predictably, and a military expedition was organized to ensure the orderly transition of government to the newly created province of Manitoba. In May 1870, a force of British Regulars and Canadian Militia was formed under the command of Colonel (later Field Marshal) Viscount Garnet Joseph Wolseley. This formation, known as the Wolseley Expedition or the Red River Expedition, totalled 1,213 officers, non-commissioned officers and men. Macleod was again called to the colours, and was appointed assistant brigade major of the expedition.

Previous British detachments for the Fort Garry garrison had been sent by way of Hudson's Bay and then up the Nelson River, but the situation's urgency required the selection of a shorter route.

The old Northwest Company of Montreal had blazed a 400-mile trail west from Thunder Bay by way of Fort Francis and the Rat Portage, then known as the Dawson Road. It was long considered impracticable for boats larger than canoes, because of the long and difficult portages and dangerous rapids. This route, traversing a dreary wilderness of forest, rock and water, was chosen, however, and by the middle of June 1871 the expedition had moved up the lakes by steamer and started the last and most difficult leg of the journey.

Time and space do not permit a recitation of the hardships this column of soldiers encountered during the following two months. Small boats had to be skidded on rollers over the forty-seven portages, but this was seen as child's play compared to the labour of loading and unloading the tons of provisions and supplies carried in the