

2. It is premised that 1,000 men be sent fully equipped.

3. That the distance be not less than 500 miles. That of this, 28 miles of road has been constructed to Dog Lake, as such was ordered to be made under my Government in 1867.

It is possible also, that the route may have been rendered more practicable to the Savanne River, 38 miles, as sanctioned by me, as Administrator of the Government in 1867.

I shall, however, consider the starting post the Dog Lake, as I am not aware whether the route beyond has yet been improved.

4. I will first consider "a force moving by land with its impedimenta in canoes."

This would be the case, if it be known, that the banks of the rivers and lakes are so far practicable as to admit of an advance of, say five or six miles per day, rendering the journey of two or three months' duration. Of course the distance will be considerably increased where long stretches of lakes intervene.

5. The equipment of a force of 1,000 men, with the necessary number of paddlers, with every absolutely necessary military appurtenance (except artillery), namely, tents on the smallest scale, ammunition, 1,000 rounds per man, blankets and extra boots, medical comforts, and food for two months, would amount to at least 190 tons, and would probably be found eventually to reach nearer 200.

Weight of Equipment —	
Food ..	185
Tents ..	3
Ammuni- tion ..	40
Blankets, &c. ..	12
	190

6. The ordinary 6-oar canoe would scarcely hold more, in a rapid stream, than one ton, in addition to its paddlers; and the size, of course, of the canoes, must be measured by the least depth of water to be passed, and the style of the rapids. Thus 190 canoes would be required.

Canoe.

It may be presumed that the ordinary Hudson Bay canoes are the best for the purpose that can be made.

Any increased size of canoe would then only increase the difficulty in portages, and require their greater frequency.

7. If my calculation be correct, each soldier would have to carry, in addition to his own burthen, over each portage about 290 lb., leaving for the paddlers, the canoes, their own things, and about 100 lb. each.

Weight to be
carried over
portages.

At one stretch there is a portage of 7 miles.

Of course the weight will be gradually reduced by consumption of food, and may be, in the first instance, decreased by a certain amount of potted provisions.

On the other hand the rate of advance may be greatly retarded by weather, or by difficulties of rock or marsh, which, if the latter be known before hand, must be thought of by an increased amount of food carried.

8. It appears to me, however, doubtful whether the troops can march throughout the whole route, as from the great extent of some of the unbroken reaches of water, it is unnatural to suppose that the Hudson Bay Company would ever have used the banks for traffic, therefore the difficulty is presented of men moving by a shore, perhaps never traversed since the days of Colonel Crofton and his small force—and then only partially—with friends on all sides, or at any rate, no foes.

In case it be known that there are impassable marshes, a greater number of canoes will be required as adjuncts, and a larger store of provisions.

If there were friends at Fort Garry, this might not signify, as they would prepare provisions for the Force at stages of the route.

9. The Force having arrived at the western extremity of Lake Plat, there is 91 miles of land carriage to Fort Garry.

If the country be not hostile, here all difficulties cease. But if hostile, there does not appear to be any power of conveying the impedimenta further; except that of dividing the Forces, leaving a portion to protect the dépôt at Lake Plat, and moving by rapid marches to Fort Garry, the boatmen carrying provisions, &c.,—a proceeding more than inexpedient.

From Lake
Plat to Fort
Garry.

10. Still these difficulties may be overcome, and always supposing the country hostile, the Force, or two-thirds, arrives before Fort Garry with, say fifteen days' provisions; but as far as I have learnt, Fort Garry is not to be taken without artillery.

Before Fort
Garry.

Nothing could, in the case supposed, justify the imprudence of such a step, except absolute starvation.

But I will even admit that the country has produced supplies: that there is a native element strong enough to keep up these supplies, and perhaps aid the British Force, and that the Fort has surrendered.

Then comes—

THE POLITICAL CONSIDERATION.

From my knowledge of the general bent of feeling of Western America, I cannot but consider the military difficulty as nothing in comparison with the political.

At the Red River there must be now a large American element.

The vicinity of Pembina, the constantly encroaching advance of the Americans along that line; nearly the whole trade of the Red River passing through Pembina and St. Paul's, will render any demonstration on the part of the British jealously watched by the Americans, and it is hardly possible to conceive, that in case of any collision between the