

liquors, is very likely to come up in the trial of this case. Major General Howard was therefore anxious this case should be referred to in my report in order that precise and definite rules should be adopted by the two governments, not only respecting the introduction of spirituous liquors into the Indian Territory of Alaska, through British soil, but also as regards the capture and detention of British subjects found violating the laws in Alaska, in the hope that military officers who in pursuance of their duty capture offenders other than American subjects, may not be liable to prosecution at law merely in retaliation. And this applies equally on both sides, for I believe at this moment Lt. Colonel McLeod is subject to a similar prosecution by a citizen of the United States for making him a prisoner upon a charge of which he was acquitted in a United States Court at Helena, through same legal technicality, though little doubt existed at the time as to his guilt.

More simple laws are required for the capture and punishment of criminals, and offenders against the laws, upon the vast and spacious prairies of the North West and in the mountainous and densely wooded countries of British Columbia and Alaska, where the population is very sparse and cosmopolitan, than in more settled and populous regions where the arrest of offenders is more easily effected, the attendance of evidence more easily procured.

Lt. Col. McLeod will in the case in point be obliged to attend personally at Helena, a distance from his post of full 400 miles across the bleak prairies, long the spurs of the Rocky Mountains in the depth of winter, to defend himself against a prosecution for an act which occurred in the execution of his duty, and so his useful services with his force will be lost for several months.

I am, Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
E. SELBY SMYTH,  
Major General.

[B.]  
OTTAWA,  
November 27, 1875.

SIR,

1. In compliance with the instructions contained in your confidential letter to me dated 24th June last, wherein I am directed in the progress of my tour through the North West Territories to visit as many as possible of the Mounted Police Posts and to make special inquiry into certain points therein detailed, bearing upon the organization, equipment, distribution, and general efficiency of the Force, I have now the honor to report to you that after my return in June from reorganizing the Militia in Prince Edward Island, and having proceeded Westward, to inspect the various Brigades of Militia encamped in Ontario, I embarked at Sarnia on the 2nd July and, passing up Lakes Huron and Superior I reached Fort Garry by way of Duluth, Moorehead and the Red River on the 15th, and after making the necessary inspections there, I finally departed for the Prairies on the 19th of that month, travelling the first 200 miles in vehicles which had been provided for myself and staff as far as Shoal Lake, where I met with the first outpost of the Mounted Police.

2. From this point I travelled throughout the North West Territories and across the Rocky Mountains full 1500 miles, escorted by a party of the Mounted Police until they were relieved at Joseph's Prairie in the

Kootenay district under arrangements made by the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia for my further progress to Van, couver's Island.

3. As I have referred in the outset to my general summer's tour of inspection I may say shortly, it embraced a distance, by the routes travelled in going and returning, of full 11,000 miles, of which upwards of 2000 were performed on horseback.

4. The general opinions I have been able to form of the North West Mounted Police, have been greatly influenced by the experience I acquired of them on my line of march through the country, I shall now therefore shortly allude to it.

5. From Shoal Lake post I proceeded direct to Swan River, about 140 miles, and on the morning of my arrival there I was overtaken by Lieutenant Cotton, an officer of the Manitoba Artillery bearing despatches to me from the Lieutenant Governor of that province.

6. The nature of these despatches was such that after a conference with the commandant, Lieutenant Colonel French, I determined to take a force of 50 Mounted Police from Swan River to Carleton, as a party of observation.

7. My reason for coming to this decision arose from the important nature of the information conveyed in the despatches, and though my impression was that the report was somewhat overdrawn, I had no possible means, so far removed from telegraphic or postal communication, to test the facts of the case except by going to see for myself.

8. I accordingly marched the following afternoon accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel French and 50 of his men. We crossed the south branch of the Saskatchewan and I reached Carleton House on the 8th day, a distance of 270 miles from Swan River, being the first armed force which had ever appeared there, or crossed the Saskatchewan.

9. The result of my investigation, I had the honor to report to you at the time. I shall therefore only say that I consider the sudden and unannounced arrival of this force had the best possible moral effect, proving so convincingly that power lay within easy reach to enforce the laws upon the slightest infraction, a fact of which the inhabitants of St. Laurent and other settlements around Carlton were up to that time in ignorance.

10. Leaving the troop of Mounted Police at Carlton, I crossed the north branch of the Saskatchewan the following day, and proceeded by way of Fort Pitt and Victoria towards Edmonton, 400 miles; but being delayed a day at Sturgeon Creek, a deep and rapid stream, in order to construct rafts for its passage, I recrossed the Saskatchewan the same afternoon at the new post established by Inspector Jarvis.

11. From thence Edmonton lies about 20 miles south; the reasons why the Police Post was fixed at this point I shall refer to further on.

12. Proceeding south, 120 miles, I crossed the Battle and Red Deer River, and at the latter found another troop of Police which had been with judgment moved to that point on learning the rumours afloat about the Carlton affair.

13. I inspected this troop the same afternoon, and next morning, marching south, Lieutenant Colonel McLeod, the Assistant Commissioner who had been waiting for me, detached the troop to a position on the Bow River, where a new police post is now established.

14. Approaching Bow River I crossed the line of route of a band of about 200 Blackfoot Indians, amongst whom were Crowfoot, the paramount, and four other chiefs of more or less note. They at once, on perceiving me riding with the guide some miles in advance of my party, galloped towards me, and, on ascertaining who I was, welcomed me with every expression of sign of sincerity and good will.

15. Crowfoot begged me to encamp there with his people to have a talk, but I declined, urging my desire to reach Bow River that night, on which the Chiefs determined to accompany me, and they did so, after dressing themselves in their best apparel.

16. Round a large council fire on the high cliffs, at whose base runs the broad and rapid Bow River, these Chiefs received myself and staff after night fall, and with the solemn dignity of their race they each in turn delivered a speech, the sum of which was in effect the great satisfaction they derived from the presence of the Mounted Police in their country, the security and peace that had succeeded to anarchy, disorder, and drunkenness, the prosperity which had replaced poverty and want;—that whereas in former times their young men were the victims of unscrupulous traders who bartered ardent spirits for their horses and buffalo robes, by which they were reduced to squalor, misery and crime—now that the infamous liquor trade had been completely put an end to by the presence and activity of the police, all this was changed for prosperity and contentment as well as security for life and property, horse stealing had become rare, because now the young men could procure what horses they required in exchange for buffalo robes, they could lie down in their lodges at night feeling security from depredation.

17. All this and much more did these calm and thoughtful old chiefs express to me, indicative of the respect and high estimation in which they held the new force the Government had been pleased to send among them.

18. They asked me in turn to speak for them to the Government in order that the land question might be settled and treaties arranged, such, as they understood, had been granted to the Eastern Prairie Indians, and this I promised them to do, giving them distinctly to understand that "Mahagauensuma," the "Great Soldier Master," as they termed me, was not charged with questions of that nature, but that I should be most happy to be the medium of expressing their wishes to the Government, whose great aim and object was to extend uniform justice and deal fairly by all the Indian tribes in whom Her Majesty the Queen took a great interest.

19. They were pleased and contented, and after expressing their gratification at seeing myself, the first General Officer who had ever passed through their land, and offering to make a new road for me if I should return next year, I bid them goodnight, they had their supper and tobacco close to my tent, upon which the British flag was flying, and before day light in the morning they had all departed.

20. But a short time ago the Blackfoot Indians would have been very unwelcome guests in a small camp during the dark hours of the night.

21. The passage of the Bow River occupied the whole of the following day, it is broad and rapid and crossing camp equipment and men by means of temporary rafts is attended with much delay and considerable risk, in fact on this occasion two men narrowly escaped drowning owing to the sinking