

threatening attitude, this reduction could not have been effected. It is an unanswerable reply to those who grumbled and civil led at the conduct of the Minister of Justice while Commissioner at Washington; and this large economy is only an incidental benefit secured to Canada by the Treaty which Sir John A. Macdonald assisted to devise. Some have avered that Canadian rights were neglected in that Treaty; that England bartered them away to her own advantage. But the answer is, that with the guarantee of Great Britain we are now able to borrow in the English market \$17,500,000, at a reduced rate of interest; add to this the saving on Militia expenses consequent on the Washington Treaty, and we must admit the advantages to this country, arising out of the compact between the Mother country and our neighbors, in these two items alone, justify the policy of the Government—*Sherbrooke News*.

THE RED RIVER EXPEDITION, 1857.

(From the Free Press.)

Much has been said and written on the subject of the late expedition to the new settlement in the Red River Territory, but very little appears to be known to the public of that which embarked at Montreal during the summer of 1857. Though nearly sixteen years since, a copy of the following narrative of the journey, which speaks for itself, may prove generally interesting, with remarks added by a gentleman who was in Montreal at the time of their departure.

Fort Garry, via St. Paul and Pembina, Minn., U.S.  
November 9, 1857.

The troops arrived here on the 12th and 13th October, having been 70 days between Montreal and the landing at York Factory; we spent 4 days at York Factory and 39 days from York Factory to Fort Garry, in all 113 days between Montreal and this place.

The ship carrying the troops met with considerable danger and detention in the ice, and was very materially damaged, but with the exception of the death of one poor child, I am happy to report that no casualty occurred on this long and dangerous journey, accompanied, as it was, by great discomfort and fatigue, amounting almost to hardship.

The health of the detachment has generally speaking, been good since leaving Canada, &c.

On the 17th ult. I received the Assist. Adjutant General's letter of the 2nd of September, directing that Capt. — should not leave this detachment until further orders.

I regret to say that the clothing and boots for 1858-9, besides the warm clothing, and the Enfield Rifles with their ammunition, which were sent direct from England to York Factory, have been left there, owing to the mismanagement of the Hudson Bay Company's servants to whom was entrusted the duty of bringing the troops and their stores to the Red River.

In addition to these things, which might have been brought up, a quantity of the stores sent from Canada have all been left at York Factory, and perhaps necessarily, as the means of transport is very inefficient. Indeed, I think it will be found that in undertaking to bring troops here and to provide for them, the Hudson Bay Company has overrated its own ability, as mentioned in my letter of 9th July, the Hudson Bay Company was unprepared for our reception.

The consequence is that nearly the whole of their supplies are required for the use of the troops, to the exclusion of the half-breeds and others who have few other means of supplying themselves, and are already, I am informed, murmuring a little against us as a cause of their discomfort, and more violently than before against the Hudson Bay Company.

Troops were never less required at Red River, so far as the internal peace of the settlement was concerned, and a few policemen at most is all they require, but our presence seems not unlikely to stir up the very broils which before arrival existed only in the imagination of those members of the Company who do not reside in their territory. Rations high and scarce, not to be got at any price. No blame can be attached to the Company's Officers on the spot as they are doing all in their power, but supplies are not in the country, nor men, nor means of transport, nor internal communication, great scarcity of provisions is expected next year.

I beg to observe as to the manner in which stores were packed up. Thus, from the Purveyor's Department, 4 barrels of sugar each weighing 140 lbs., a barrel of rice 138 lbs., a barrel of barley 132 lbs., a box of sugar, 123 lbs.—all of which would have to be repacked before they could be carried from York Factory to Red River.

The port wine was packed in barrels and must have been broken had it been conveyed in that manner; and the corks for the bottles of wine were in many instances merely fragments of old corks, some not half an inch deep, so that all the wine in the bottles leaked out on the journey from York Factory and was lost.

From the Medical Department the things appear to be correct with one important exception, that in place of a lot of cupping instruments, one resembling that sort of box, containing glass bottles of medicine, had been substituted.

From the Barrack department several articles were packed in baskets and torn to shreds long before the journey's end, and their contents—such as metal basins, were consequently broken, and other packages did not contain the number of articles marked on them—for instance, on opening some of the bales, &c., four blankets, one pallasse, a hatchet, a scrubber, &c., were deficient, but for which the troops are supposed to be held accountable.

From the War Department, Canada, three or more packages overweight. No field officers' Marquees and a scarcity of tents.

From the War Department, England, the invoices which have been received, show that the Enfield Rifles are packed in such large cases (20 rifles in each) that they must be re-packed at York Factory into cases made at that place containing eight rifles each. The boots and shoes must also be re-packed into smaller cases before they can be transported on men's backs over the steep and rough portages between York Factory and Lake Winnipeg. I may also remark there are invoices from that Department which were evidently intended for the Hudson Bay Company and to be at York Factory to meet the arrival of these things from England, was directed to the "Officer Commanding at York Factory, Hudson Bay, Canada," in consequence of which, after being a month longer on the road than it should have been, it came here and was given to men when too late for it to be sent on to York Factory and moreover if it was intended, which it evidently was, for the Hudson Bay Company—it should have been directed to the "Gentlemen in Charge."

These things may appear to be trifling, and it may be wrong in thus reporting them, but they cause inconvenience, &c., &c.

(Signed)

ROYAL CANADIAN RIFLES.

No mention is made in any invoice received of any accoutrements having been sent for the new Enfield Rifles.

The vessel employed upon this expedition was the wooden sailing ship *Great Britain* of London, Dan, Wilson Master, 572 tons register. She left Montreal with the Royal Canadian Rifles aboard on the 23rd June 1857 for York Factory, Hudson Bay, a distance through the straits of Belle Isle of nearly 3,000 miles about 150 miles more than the voyage to Liverpool, but of course much more tedious. It is believed she arrived at York Factory about the 1st September, making the whole time about seventy days.

So little was known of this part of the world (this *terra incognita*) that Captain Wilson tried in vain to procure a chart before sailing, and as a consequence had to proceed very cautiously through fields of floating ice, etc., "hence the cause of the length of time occupied in the voyage. The ship was not detained at York Factory; she was discharged as soon as possible, left in ballast and arrived in Montreal, 17th October. A ship of this name, the *Great Britain*, and supposed to be the same vessel was wrecked about 8 years since on her voyage from London to the East Indies.

The Rifles had a long journey before them of land and water from York Factory (which lies at the embouchure of the Great Nelson river) to Upper Fort Garry, in all about 640 miles.

The line of march for the first 120 miles was southwesterly along the tortuous course of the Hayes River (some times called the St. River) and then over the silurian belt or ridge dividing the waters flowing north-easterly into Hudson Bay from those flowing south westerly into the Winnipeg, making the whole distance of this march overland about 300 miles.

After this long and tedious march the expeditionary force was embarked in canoes and proceeded southward along Lake Winnipeg, another 300 miles to the mouth of the Red River, 20 miles from Lower Fort Garry, commonly known as the "Stone Fort," having been erected there, it is said, at the expense of the Hudson Bay Company, about 30 years since, by the officers and men of the 60th Regiment, and in its construction said to be much better adapted for offensive than defensive purposes. The headquarters of the force was at Upper Fort Garry, 20 miles from the Lower Fort, thus making the whole journey from Montreal to Upper Fort Garry about 3,640 miles.

The altitude of Lake Winnipeg above the sea level is given as 600 feet, about the same as that of Lake Superior.

The Nelson River at York Factory is the great outlet of the vast accumulation of waters running eastward of the Rocky Mountains into Lake Winnipeg, and in volume have been assured by a gentleman of great experience is equal to the St. Lawrence, below Three Rivers.

The causes which led to this expedition may form the subject of another communication. It has been stated from unquestionable authority that if the precaution had not been taken of sending this expedition to Fort Garry, small as it was, much trouble and probably bloodshed would have occurred among the half-breeds and disaffected similar to what happened on more recent occasions.