

infantry, and so enable the column to proceed more rapidly. As a first reserve of field gun ammunition for both columns was at the Landing awaiting transport by the "Northcote," I handed over one-third to Colonel Otter's column for the use of "B" Battery, but unfortunately the boxes were incorrectly labelled, and although the selection was made by an experienced Artillery officer, Major Short, the division was subsequently found to be uneven, the fuze not being in proportion to the projectiles. Colonel Otter and Colonel Herchmer urged that I should engage some more scouts; and some ex-Mounted Policemen offering almost immediately, who, from their training and knowledge of the Indian language and ways, were specially qualified, I sent them forward to report to Colonel Otter; but as I could obtain no information as to terms, I engaged these men on same rate of pay as allowed by you to scouts in your column, and to serve under and be subject to discharge by Colonel Herchmer.

Captain Sheets, of the "Northcote," was very sanguine as to the practicability of using the river for transport, and guaranteed its navigation till nearly the end of August; but the want of land transport delayed completion of loading the steamer, and meantime the river became too shallow to float her over the rapids; but he at this time insisted that Commissioner Wrigley wished him to leave for Prince Albert to bring out the steamer "Northwest," and he even drove to Swift Current with that intention, and I had considerable difficulty in persuading him to return; but, as he was the only captain who had experience in navigating the river, I telegraphed and obtained authority from Mr. Wrigley that he should go down the river with the "Northcote," and drove him back with me to the Landing.

Ascertaining that only 20,000 rounds Gatling ammunition had been received, I at once telegraphed for 50,000 additional, but could only get an order issued for this quantity after considerable correspondence, and the supply did not arrive till a month later.

Finding that the available land transport would not admit of my loading the "Northcote" promptly and despatching her as you desired, I submitted a proposition to hold back Colonel Otter's column for, possibly, five days (it would actually have been only three days) and to transfer part of his supplies to steamer, and to send her off to you with Colonel Williams' half battalion, establishing with remainder of supplies a depot north of the river, and using all of Colonel Otter's transport train for one trip to Swift Current, which would thus have given 220 tons of stores (additional) at river, and facilitated the forwarding further supplies both to your column and Colonel Otter's; but, as you considered the delay might have resulted in danger to Battleford, and desired that Colonel Otter should not be delayed, he moved forward on 18th April, and a transport train of about 30 teams was left to load the "Northcote," as well as provision detachment at Landing, and forward necessary supplies to the Battleford Column and garrison.

Mr. White, the Assistant Transport Officer, who had, I believe, been selected by Major Bell, was a lawyer from Regina, and had no previous experience of such work or executive training, and, of course, no knowledge of details, but was untiring in his efforts to get the work done, and, fortunately, had some very practical and energetic subordinates, but the whole service was utterly inadequate for its duties, so I at once sent out notices in every direction that all suitable teams would be taken over, and notified the Transport Officer that 100 teams would be required to provide load for the "Northcote" every ten days, and 150 for the Battleford route; and in this estimate I calculated on obtaining, in addition, the use of the 230 teams which accompanied Colonel Otter; but, as the farm waggons, which were the only class obtainable, were unfitted with racks or nets for conveyance of forage, in addition to regular load, it became necessary to appropriate some waggons, at the rate of one in ten, for a three days' stage, to carry forage and supplies for the convoy, and this again materially reduced the general transport.

By your instructions, I recalled one Gatling from Colonel Otter, and this was brought back with some men of the Winnipeg Field Battery and Captain Howard, of the Connecticut National Guard, as Instructor, and placed on "Northcote" in readiness to join your column: