

Winnipeg Cavalry, Captain Knight	40
Humboldt.—	
Governor General's Body Guard, Lt.	
Col. Denison	70
Total	2895

On the 5th of May the long expected steamer arrived after a tedious journey, most of which seemed to have been made on land. All the steamers on this river are stern-wheelers, and have four strong spars fastened, two on each side of the bow, by a sort of hinge. These spars are kept triced up until the vessel runs on a shoal or sand-bank—which are many and shifting—when they are lowered and the vessel is forced over the obstacle, made to walk over it as it were. The steamer, besides supplies, brought two companies, about 80 men, of the so-called Midlander Battalion, formed from several Midland battalions, under command of Lt. Col. A. Williams, M. P. A gatling gun in charge of a Captain Howard, late United States Army, an agent of the Gatling Company, and Lt. Col. Van Straubenzee, whom I was glad to see. He had served in the Crimea with the old Buffs, and having retired was then serving as Deputy Adjutant General in the Canadian militia, and had now come to join my force. Dr. Roddick had also come in the vessel from Saskatoon to report to me. Having discussed and settled with him the different medical arrangements, he left the same afternoon, taking with him in a waggon my aide-de-camp, Captain Doucet, whose wound he considered of a serious nature, the bone having been, in his opinion, shattered. This proved to be the case, and he practically lost the use of his right arm. On that day I also got the news of Lt. Col. Otter's engagement on the 2nd day of May with Poundmaker and his Indians at Cut-knife Creek, about 30 miles from Battleford. The movement which led to the engagement was made without my orders, though Lt. Col. Otter had the approval of Lt. Governor Dewdney, to whom however he should not have applied on such a purely military matter. Otter's force numbered about 325 men with two seven-pounders and one gatling, the enemy being estimated at about 200. About six hours' engagement the trails of both guns having been broken, finding his position not tenable at night, and considering the object of his reconnaissance accomplished, he concluded to return at once to Battleford in case a counter attack might be made on that place. His casualties amounted to eight killed and fourteen wounded, including one officer, Lt. O. Pelletier, 9th Battalion, doing duty with artillery. Though this affair could not be considered a success, it reflected great credit on the untried officers and men engaged in it. The retirement—a difficult operation, especially with raw troops—appeared to have been remarkably well carried out by Lt. Col. Otter, who in his despatch wrote very highly of the conduct of both men and officers, naming some specially, in addition to his personal staff, namely: Lt. Sears, 58th Staffordshire Regiment, doing duty with C Company School Corps, and Brigade Major and Capt. Mutton, 2nd Queen's Own Regiment, Brigade Quartermaster.

On the 6th of May all preparations were made for marching on the morrow. I formed the infantry into a brigade, giving the command of it to Lt. Col. Van Straubenzee, with Captain Young of the Winnipeg battery at Brigade Major, a most energetic and zealous officer. I directed Captain Haig to make the upper deck of the steamer Northcote bullet-proof, which was done as well as was possible with the means and time at his command, and I placed a small force on board with a view to the vessel taking part in the attack: Thirty-one rank and file, two officers C Company School Corps, Captain Bedson, my aide-de-camp, Captain Wise, who though better was, to my great loss, incapacitated from walking or riding, three sick officers, Doctor Moore and Mr. Pringle, medical staff, several men of supply and transport services, Mr. G. Ham, a newspaper correspondent, and some settlers returning to their homes, amounting with some of the crew to about fifty combatants, the whole under command of Major Smith, whose orders were to anchor the first night abreast of our camp, remain there the next day, and on the morning of the 9th drop down and meet the column at about 8, just above Batoche. On the 7th we marched and halted at Gabriel Dumont's Ferry, where the steamer also anchored. Just as we were leaving Fish Creek Camp we were joined by Surgeon Major J. Bell with Surgeon Gravelly, Assistant Surgeon Wright, and six dressers, a most welcome addition to our medical staff. My force was now nearly 700 strong and in excellent spirits. As I had learnt there were some nasty places to pass on the river trail, I rode out with some scouts to the east, accompanied by Mr. Reid, the paymaster of the Midlanders, a surveyor by profession, who had assisted in laying out allotments, &c., in this very neighbourhood. With his assistance I marked out a route for next day's march which would bring us on the Humboldt trail about five or six miles from Batoche. On the morrow we marched and halted close to the trail on some rising ground with a small lake on one flank and the open prairie on the other. Leaving Van Straubenzee to pitch camp I rode forward with Boulton and his scouts to within about a mile of Batoche, driving in some of the enemy's scouts, and I selected a site for a camp about three miles from our present one, in case I should want it next day. In the evening I assembled the commanding officers and told them what I proposed doing. Captain Freer of our Staffordshire Regiment, doing duty with B Infantry School, joined us here to act as my aide-de-camp. He, like his disabled predecessors, was a graduate of that excellent and valuable institution, the Royal Military College at Kingston, Canada, and proved most useful to me.

Next morning, the 9th of May, we started at about 6 a.m., leaving our camp standing with a small guard to assist the teamsters in case of an attack which, however, I did not think likely to occur. We advanced with our scouts well ahead, two of the guns and the gatling being

near the head of the column. As we got near the river, much to my annoyance we heard a rattling fire and the steamer's whistle, showing that the latter was already engaged. We fired a gun to let them know we were at hand, and pushed on. When we arrived where the trail turned to follow the river there was no sign of the steamer, but we could hear her whistle going and continuous firing, and trusted all was well with her.

On ahead we saw some houses, and some men running wildly about. A round or two from the gatling, and a few shells, set fire to one of the houses and scattered the men, who, after a few long shots at us, disappeared behind what was apparently a church with a large wooden house close beside it. From the side of the latter a few shots were fired at us as we advanced. This was soon stopped by the fire of the gatling, which then turned its fire on the house, luckily without effect, as we caught sight of a white flag being waved from a window. I stopped the fire and rode up to the house, which I found to be full of people; three or four Roman Catholic priests, some sisters of mercy, and a number of women and children, the latter being all half-breeds. They were naturally alarmed, and having reassured them we continued our advance. Our scouts, who had cautiously advanced beyond the church, were at once checked by a fire from a sort of low brush about 200 or 300 yards ahead, and in accordance with my orders they galloped back and formed up behind the church. The 10th Grenadiers were now brought up and two companies extended and pushed forward to the edge of a ravine in front, two more companies being extended near the church. The guns and gatling were now brought up and opened fire, the former on the houses in Batoche, the latter on a thick scrub on the opposite side of the river, from whence a galling fire was being kept up by a totally invisible enemy. Finding the gun detachments and horses were suffering, I directed them to retire, and as they were doing so a heavy fire was suddenly opened upon them from a bluff just below. This fire was momentarily stopped by the gatling, which was well and gallantly handled by Captain Howard under the direction of Lieutenant Rivers' Canadian Artillery. But the fire soon recommenced, killing a horse and wounding one of the gunners working the gatling, which I ordered also to retire. The wounded man was pluckily brought in by my aide-de-camp, Captain Freer, assisted by gunner Coyne of B Battery. Leaving Melgund on the left, I rode over to the church and found the extended line holding its ground under a heavy fire from a bluff in front. I brought the gatling round the church, and Captain Howard made a dashing attempt to flank the bluff, but could not succeed, as the enemy were safely ensconced in well-made rifle-pits. Returning to the left, I found Captain Peters had made a gallant and vigorous attempt, with a few of the garrison artillery, to drive the enemy out of the bluff below, but had failed and had retired, leaving a wounded man behind. I directed Lt. Col. Williams to advance