

*Red River Expedition of 1870.**(Written for The Manitoban)*

BY AN OFFICER OF THE FORCE.

(Concluded.)

AFTER having a good night's rest and comfortable sleep at Fort Alexander, the *Reveille* sounded at 3:15 a. m., and after a hearty breakfast on the good things purchased at the Fort, we launched our little flotilla again on the river, and in less than an hour we found ourselves out on the rolling swelling waves, of Lake Winnipeg. Fort Alexander has improved very little now from what it was ther. It is nicely situated on the left bank of the Winnipeg River, about five miles from its mouth. The banks of the river are high at this place, and on account of the numerous clearings and nice thatched cottages of the Half-Breeds, it presents a very fine appearance. There is also a good farm, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, which is kept in a first-class state of cultivation. The land is good in the immediate vicinity of the Fort, but a few miles back from the river it loses itself in a succession of small lakes and swamps—unpassable in the summer season. There is a Church of England Mission here, as in most other Forts throughout the Northwest, where the Half-Breeds and Indians receive an excellent religious and secular education.

The morning was warm, bright and clear, the hot sun beaming down on our little fleet undersail. It presented indeed a pretty appearance, and was well worthy of a preserved photograph. As we rounded the Point of Elk Island, the waves seemed to increase to such a degree, that it was deemed advisable to put into a nice little sheltered harbor, with a beautiful sandy beach, on the east shore of the lake, where we had dinner and awaited the calming

of the waters. Fires were soon lighted, the good things purchased at Fort Alexander, were produced and in a very short time an excellent and luxurious meal was provided. It was now past mid-day, the wind increased and blew from the south a heavy gale, and put an end to the use of sailing gear for the rest of the day, and in fact for the rest of the expedition. Having now only to cross the south arm of Lake Winnipeg, we waited several hours, thinking that the wind and waves might abate, during which time we took a stroll inland through the woods. The land on the eastern shore is rocky, and in places thickly covered with birch and poplar. Unlike most other lakes in the Northwest, the shores of Lake Winnipeg on its eastern and western sides are high and gravelly, with a beautiful sandy approach to the waters edge, and the waters very transparent. The wind kept on increasing till late in the afternoon, and as there was no sign of a calm our guide would not permit us to venture, as he said Winnipeg was a most dangerous and treacherous lake at this season of the year.

Next morning we made a start at 8 a. m., and rowed all day against strong head winds and heavy waves, for a distance of thirty miles to the mouth of Red River, where we reached at 9 p. m. It was agreed on all hands that this was the most difficult rowing day of the expedition, the blisters on the mens hands bearing testimony to the statement.

When we reached the southern end of the lake we found the water in places very shallow, and as the night was dark and cloudy, it took a long time to discover the channel leading into Red River. The boats went aground in many places, miles out in the lake, and got separated from each other, the men having to get out into the water, and up to the waist in slush and mud, and