

ENGAGEMENT WITH POUNDMAKER'S BAND.

BATTLEFORD, 26th May, 1885.

SIR,—I have the honor to forward herewith for the information of His Excellency the Governor General and yourself, Lieut.-Col. Otter's despatch concerning his engagement with the Chief Poundmaker and his band on the 2nd of May last. Though Lieut.-Col. Otter made this attack under a misunderstanding of my orders on the subject, he and his men seem to have done their duty well, and are deserving of great praise, and had the force been larger, the consequence might have been more decided.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

FRED. MIDDLETON, *Major-General,*

Commanding Canadian Militia North-West Field Force

Hon. J. P. R. A. CARON, Minister of Militia, Ottawa.

BATTLEFORD, 3rd May, 1885.

From Lt.-Col. Otter, Commanding Battleford Column N. W. F. F., to Major General Middleton, Commanding Militia of Canada :

SIR,—I have the honor to report that having learned on the 29th ultimo, from my scouts that a force of Cree and Stoney Indians, numbering about 200 men, were camped near the reserve of the former tribe, some 38 miles from here, and subsequently that Poundmaker the Cree chief was hesitating between peace and war, the latter eventually depending upon his being able to obtain assistance from Big Bear's tribe, I felt it necessary that definite action should be taken, in order to make Poundmaker declare himself, and prevent a junction of the forces of the two chiefs.

I determined on a reconnoissance in force, and left Battleford on Friday, the 1st inst., at 3 p.m. with the following troops, viz.:—

75 Mounted Police, of whom 50 were mounted, Capt. Neale.

80 "B" Battery, R.C.A., Major Short.

45 "C" Company, I.S.C., Lieut. Wadmore.

20 G. G. Foot Guards, Lieut. Gray.

60 Queen's Own Rifles, Capt. Brown, including the Ambulance Corps of same regiment.

45 Battleford Rifles, Capt. Nash.

One Gatling gun and two 7-pounders belonging to police, the latter being selected as more easy of transport than the 9-pounder guns, and a train of 43 wagons to carry men, rations and stores.

Halting at 8 p.m., I waited nearly four hours, until the moon rose and then pushed on through the night, reaching at daybreak the enemy's camp, which was seen on the higher of two hills, partially surrounded by a wide ravine with a large creek running through it. Crossing the creek our advanced guard, the scouts and police, were almost at the top of the lower hill before our presence was discovered and the general alarm sounded; hardly had our scouts gained the crest of the hill when the advanced party of the enemy was met, who opened fire upon our men with vigor. The police immediately extended on the brow, and the guns, supported by "B" Battery, were pushed forward into the same line, opening fire with shrapnel on the camp. The Indians, who had evidently been taken by surprise, very quickly gathered themselves together and attempted to surround us. So large was their force that it required the whole of ours to be placed in the fighting line to meet the attack. Taking advantage of the cover afforded by the many small coulees and ravines surrounding our position, a most vicious and determined cross fire was poured in upon our men, which, at first, proved most destructive, owing to carelessness in exposing themselves. Soon, however, we followed the example of our foes, and made