

E. A. Chamberlain

PATROL REPORT

INSPECTOR A. E. SNYDER,

EDMONTON TO JASPER HOUSE, ATHABASCA DISTRICT, 1897.

NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE.

EDMONTON, 28th October, 1897.

To the Officer Commanding
"G" Division N.W.M.P.
Fort Saskatchewan.

SIR,—I have the honour to state that in compliance with orders received I left Edmonton on July 15th on a patrol to cover the following localities in the unorganized portions of the Territories, namely, Jasper House, Sturgeon Lake, Grand Prairie, Dunvegan, Peace River and Slave Lake. My patrol consisted of Constables Smith and McClelland with Special Constable W. P. Taylor as packer, and seven pack ponies and four saddle horses.

My route lay west of Edmonton via Lac St. Ann's, a lake of twelve by four miles, distant fifty miles from Edmonton, and which I reached on the 17th inst. I regret to state that near this place the packer, W. P. Taylor, had the misfortune to dislocate his shoulder by being jerked down by one of the pack horses which he was catching. The dislocation was, however, at once reduced by the two constables, and though rather painful for a time he continued his work. I lay over at Lac St. Ann's on the 18th. Lac St. Ann's is the most westerly outpost of "G" Division. The strength of this outpost is one constable. There is a half-breed settlement about the lake and three Indian reserves in the vicinity. The Hudson's Bay have a trading post under the management of Mr. T. Taylor. On the 19th I left the lake but had only journeyed one day when compelled to lay up for two owing to a very heavy rain storm which was incessant for two days and three nights and made the trails almost impassable and very trying for the horses. On the 23rd I reached Island Lake, where Pierre Grey had a trading post. This is the locality where the murder occurred a year ago and for which Kam-inkow-gate and Charlie Joachim were sentenced to ten years in the penitentiary. When I reached there, there were no Indians about, being off on their summer meat hunt and drying berries. At that season of the year they hunt moose and bear and dry the meat for winter consumption. The hunting grounds of the Lac St. Ann's Indians lie between the McLeod River (which is a tributary of the Athabasca) on the north and the watershed of the Saskatchewan on the south, and as far west as the base of the mountains, where they hunt sheep and goats which they kill also for drying. There is one spot on the McLeod River where they slaughter sheep and goats in great numbers, the place is known as the "Big Alkali Lick." They watch the lick from hiding places till they see a number of the sheep go down, and as the lick lies in a hole, they get at the outlet, of which there is but one, and kill all that are there.

The trail from St. Ann's to the Pembina River is through heavy poplar and the travelling most difficult. The Pembina is a stream of about one hundred yards in width and usually fordable but when I crossed it was a raging torrent, owing to the recent heavy rains. Throughout this portion of the trail there are several short bad muskegs. The trail after leaving the Pembina River, traverses a country comprised alternately of burnt and green timber, green poplar and prairie, till a stream known as the Buffalo dung River is reached, when, for a long distance the trail runs through very extensive and bad muskegs and on the higher ground great quantities of fallen timber. Through here the present trail follows in part the old Moberley trail to Jasper House, built by the Government for conveying supplies during the Jasper Pass survey in the years 1873-