



La Petite Guerre

Small Warfare

18th-19th Century in North America

Game Scenario

Batoche Day 4

12 May 1885

Historical Background

The Canadian Northwest was not settled with quite the same degree of violence as the Western USA. Inevitably there was conflict as the Canadian government pushed westward, encouraging settlement of the vast open prairies, partially in an attempt to discourage northward encroachment by the Americans.

The Canadian Northwest was the epicentre of the lucrative fur trade, monopolised by the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). Indigenous Cree, Assiniboine and Sioux roamed the prairies following the bison herds, as well as providing furs to the HBC in exchange for European goods. French and Scottish fur traders also made the Northwest their home, most taking indigenous wives. Their numbers were augmented by people cleared from the Scottish Highlands to form a settlement along the Red River in modern Manitoba. These mixed race peoples became known as the Metis.

When the Dominion of Canada started expanding westward trouble soon erupted when the government did not recognise the existing Metis settlements. Led by Louis Riel, the Metis resisted Canadian encroachment. In May 1885 the Metis, supported by Cree and Sioux, made a stand at Batoche to defend their traditional way of life. The Canadian authorities treated this as a rebellion and sent an army against them.

The Battle of Batoche (in modern Northwest Saskatchewan) lasted four days. This scenario is based on the last day of the battle, which historically saw the Canadian government troops overwhelm the defenders of Batoche to crush the rebellion.

The numbers of men at Batoche were quite small — around 2-300 Metis, Cree and Sioux against some 900 Canadians. This scenario, therefore, can be played out with individually based figures representing about 5 actual men.



The Metis, Cree and Sioux defenders of Batoche dug 'rifle-pits' — deep reinforced entrenchments with firing steps from which they could engage the attacking Canadians from cover. I tend to represent these on the table-top with twigs and bits of lichen.

Canadian Brief

Situation

It is now 10 am, 12 May 1885. After 3 days of failing to break through the rebel lines in the south, In a final attempt to break through, Sir Frederick Middleton has moved the artillery, supported by a troop of the Northwest Mounted Police (NWMP) to the Carlton Trail approach with the intention of drawing the Metis north from their rifle pits thus weakening their strong southern defences. From this position the 9 pounders will also be able to bring fire to bear on Batoche. The guns opening fire will be the signal for, Lt Col. van Straubenzie to lead the infantry in a concentrated attack to break through in the south and then on to Batoche.

Order of Battle.

Sir Frederick Middleton commanding, 2 Command Points (CPs). Sword and revolver, A Grade.
May be mounted or dismounted. Deployed on the Northern flank.

Northern Flank

Lt Col C.E. Montizambert commanding the Artillery, 2 CPs, B Grade.

A Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery. 2 nine-pounder rifled breach loaders
1 Gatling Gun

Troop of the NWMP *May be mounted or dismounted*

Capt John French commanding, 3 CPs. Sword & revolver, A Grade

Sgt Doyle. Winchester & revolver, A Grade.

5 constables. Winchester & revolver, B Grade

Main Effort, southern flank.

Lieutenant Colonel Bowen van Straubenzie commanding, 2 CPs. Sword and revolver, A Grade.
May be mounted or dismounted.

Detachment of the 10th Royal Grenadiers

Lt F.J. Dickens commanding, 1 CP. sword and revolver, C Grade

8 grenadiers, Snider-Enfield & bayonet, C Grade

Detachment of the 90th Winnipeg Rifles

Lt Hildebrandt commanding, 1 CP, sword & revolver, B Grade

8 riflemen. Snider-Enfield & bayonet, C Grade

Detachment of The Midland Battalion

Lt A.E. Doucet commanding, 1 CP. sword and revolver, C Grade

8 privates, Snider-Enfield & bayonet, C Grade

Deployment (See map on next page).

The artillery and NWMP may be deployed as you wish within the red box marked on the map.

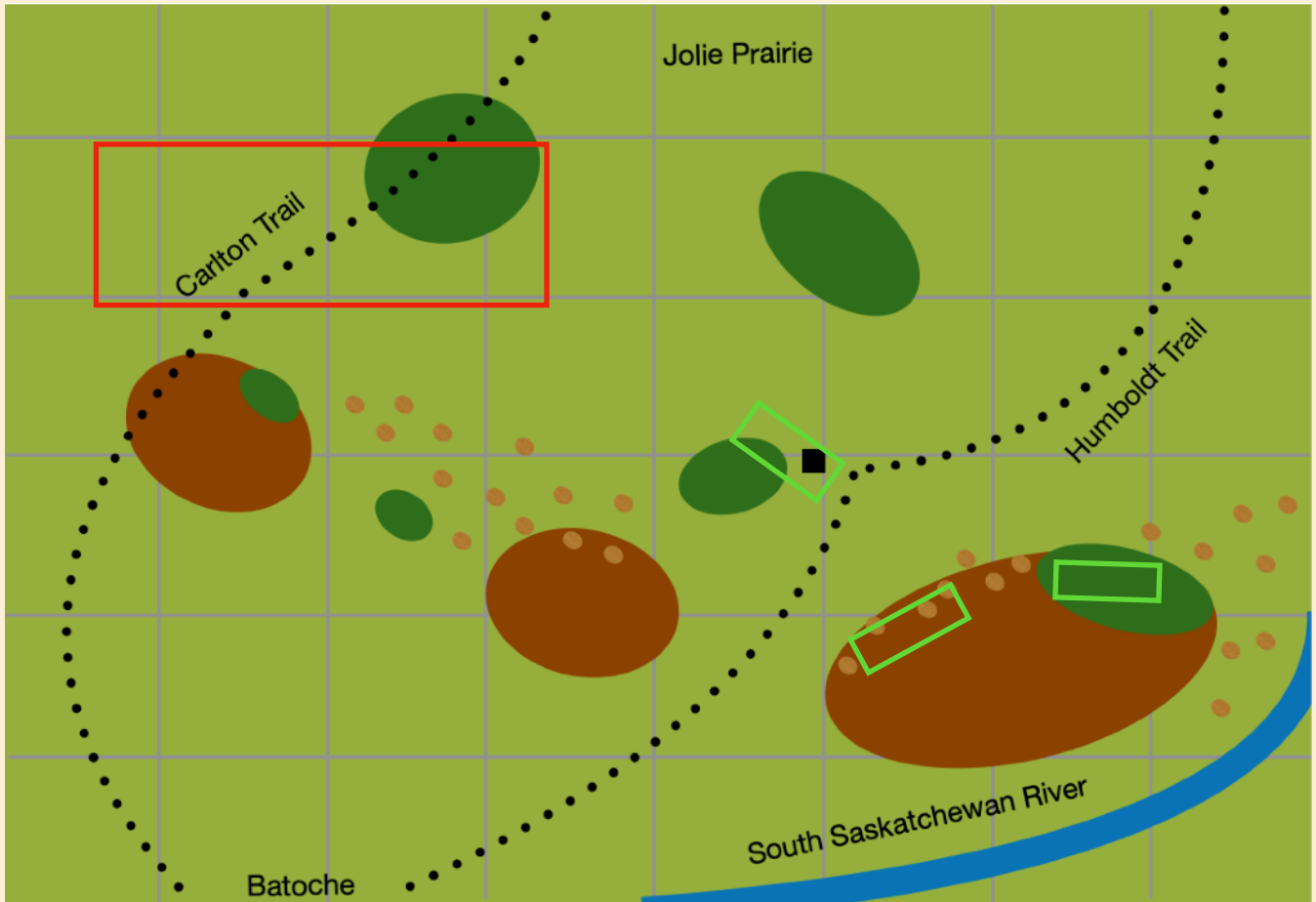
Van Straubenzie and the infantry are initially off table in the Zareba (temporary fortified camp). As soon as they hear the guns firing they may begin to advance in one, two or three columns (your choice) from the Eastern table edge, anywhere within 6" of the Humbolt Trail. You may choose to delay your entry to give time for the Metis to move to the north before coming on-table. If so you need to state how many turns you will delay before the game starts.

All moves by a column may be doubled until that column sees enemy within 12" or comes under fire.

Known Metis positions are marked in green boxes on the map. They are occupying rifle pits and the church with approximately 5-8 men in each known position. You also know that they have men in Batoche but not how many. Your scouts have not seen any enemy covering the Carlton Trail approach but there is evidence of rifle pits there. It is reported that the Metis are low on ammunition.

East

Zareba



West

Legend

-  High Ground
-  Woods
-  Scrub
-  Church

The trails have no effect on movement other to allow passage through woods in single file as if moving in open.

The river is impassable.

Grid lines at 1 foot intervals



The Canadian gun lines — 9 pounder rifled breach loaders and a Gatling gun

Metis Brief

Situation

You have successfully held off attacks by the Canadians for three days. Having failed to break through on the south, the enemy have now switched their attack to your undefended northern flank.

You have suffered far fewer casualties than the enemy but they are being reinforced as your numbers dwindle. You are dangerously low on ammunition for your repeating rifles. Ammunition is not a problem for the muzzle-loaders.

Metis

Louis Riel commanding. 1 CP, unarmed, C Grade. (preacher)

Any Metis who can see Louis Riel (line of sight at any distance, as long as he is not prone and not wounded) +1 to any and all morale rolls. If he is killed or seriously wounded all Metis who see this will immediately retire. Cree and Sioux are not influenced by Riel.

Metis Frontiersmen. *May be mounted or dismounted.*

Gabriel Dumont. 3 CPs, Winchester, A Grade, marksman

5 Metis. Winchesters, A Grade, all marksmen.

Note: Dumont may influence any Metis, not just those of his immediate command. He cannot influence Cree or Sioux.

Metis 1

Patrice Fleury. 2 CPs, Winchester, A Grade, marksman

5 settlers. Muzzle-loaders, B Grade

Metis 2

Jean Caron. 1 CP, Winchester, B Grade

5 settlers. Muzzle-loaders, B Grade

Cree

One Arrow. 2 CPs, spear and revolver, A Grade

Red Jacket. Winchester, A Grade

Blue Cap. Winchester, A Grade

4 Cree. Muzzle-loaders, B Grade

Sioux. *May be mounted or dismounted*

White Cap. 2 CPs, Winchester, A Grade

2 Sioux. Winchesters, A Grade

Deployment *See map on next page*

Metis 1& 2 and the Cree are deployed in pre-dug rifle pits and the church as shown on the map.

The Sioux are deployed in reserve behind them — either mounted or dismounted, your choice.

The Frontiersmen are held in reserve at Batoche.

Louis Riel is also at Batoche.

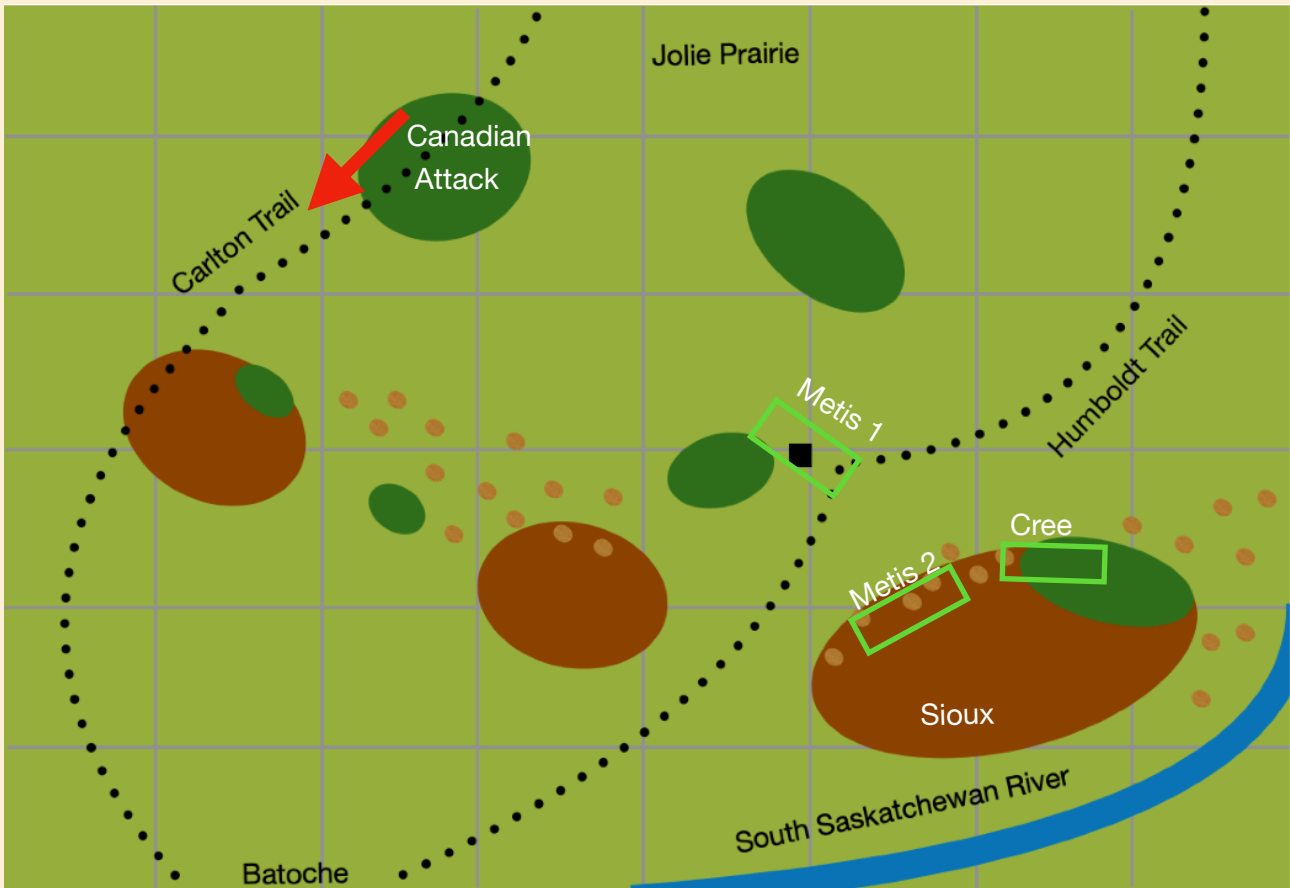
Movement is doubled until enemy seen by a unit within 12" or they come under fire.

The new Canadian attack is marked by the red arrow on the map.

You do have a number of empty rifle pits on the northern flank covering the Carlton Trail approach.

Each man with a repeater has only 6 rounds. These can be replenished by sharing ammo with another figure in base to base contact, or from Batoche where there is a small remaining store (small dice can serve as ammo supply markers).

East



West

Legend

-  High Ground
-  Woods
-  Scrub
-  Church

The trails have no effect on movement other than to allow passage through woods in single file as if moving in open.

The river is impassable.

Grid lines at 1 foot intervals



Gabriel Dumont's men advance from Batoche.