

Red River Rebellion against Canadian administration in the former Hudson's Bay Company lands.<sup>100</sup>

Since Confederation the gunboats had come under the militia department, the only change being that Wyatt reported now to George-Étienne Cartier, the militia minister. The British military command valued the vessels whose mobility was a force multiplier in keeping watch along the border and responding quickly to any alert.<sup>101</sup> Colonel Patrick Robertson-Ross, the British officer who served as adjutant general of the Canadian militia, supported Wyatt's recommendation that the older *Rescue* should be replaced by a new purpose-built gunboat. The government would not go that far, but did fund the refit and improvements Wyatt recommended for the vessel.<sup>102</sup>

For much of the 1871 season, *Rescue* operated under the orders of the chief engineer for the Canadian Pacific Railway transporting men and equipment for survey of the rail construction route along the north shore of Lake Superior. *Prince Alfred* served as a transport for militia units and as a firing platform for artillery practice during annual training. The vessel had been built as a powerful tug and during the fall returned to that role assisting ships caught in heavy gales on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. As Wyatt noted, the insurance companies of the ships the steamer had rescued paid all its operating costs for that period.<sup>103</sup> Both vessels participated in the militia's annual training in 1872<sup>104</sup> and this appears to have been their last active employment with the military. The Fenian movement in the US, whose threat was the reason why the ships had been purchased, looked like a spent force, and relations between Britain, Canada, and the United States were greatly improved by the resolution of outstanding disputes in the Treaty of Washington concluded in 1871. Late in that year, the last of the British Army garrisons in Canada departed, save for the troops that protected Halifax, which was still the Royal Navy's main base in the north-west Atlantic. The Canadian government sold *Rescue* in the spring of 1873, and in the following spring transferred *Prince Alfred* to the

---

<sup>100</sup> *Sessional Papers, 1871*, vol. IV, no. 7, "Annual Report on the State of the Militia for 1870," 132-3; *Sessional Papers 1871*, vol. VI, no. 47 [appended], "Return...showing the Names of all Vessels Chartered... Expedition to the North-West in 1870," 4-5.

<sup>101</sup> Lieutenant General James Lindsay to governor general, 26 July 1870, *Sessional Papers, 1871*, vol. V, no. 46, 52; Lieutenant General Sir Hastings Doyle to governor general, 25 November 1870, 62.

<sup>102</sup> "Annual Report on the State of the Militia for 1870," 49; PC 156/24 February 1872, RG2 A1a, vol. 295, reel C-3299, LAC.

<sup>103</sup> *Sessional Papers, 1872*, vol. V, no. 8, "Annual Report on the State of the Militia for 1871," 60, 96-9.

<sup>104</sup> *Sessional Papers, 1873*, vol. V, no. 9, "Annual Report on the State of the Militia for 1872," xvi, xlii.