

Richard Hardisty: Metis Soldier. (1862-1885)

Richard Hardisty is but one example of Metis men who because of their employment ended up fighting against fellow Metis at Batoche. Sadly he was killed there at age 22 on the last day of fighting.

Richard Hardisty was a Metis, born June 6th, 1862, the son of William Lucas Hardisty and Mary Ann Allen, he was the grandson of Richard Hardisty (c. 1790) and Margaret Sutherland. His father was a HBC Chief Factor at Fort Simpson. His sister Isabella Clark Hardisty was married to Senator James Alexander Lougheed.

Richard served for the British on the Nile Expedition (1884-85) and upon his return was sent with Middleton's troops to Batoche. He died on May 12, 1885 at Batoche (Private in the 90th Battalion). Middleton reported:

Our total loss since Saturday last is dead, James Fraser and Richard Hardisty of the 90th, Lt. A. W. Kippen, of a surveyors Corps, Lt. W. Fitch, and Private Moore of Grenadier's Corps. E. T. Brown of Boulton's Horse, Gunner William Phillips of A Battery, and Captain John French of Seventh.

Reporter George Flinn of the *Winnipeg Daily Sun* filed this report:

7:00 p.m. — Our skirmishers commenced retiring, and whilst leaving the ground, near the church, I regret to say that Dick Hardisty, of B Company, was shot through the head. He was brought to camp in an unconscious state from the lying-in hospital tent at Batoche.

Six, a.m., May 12. — Hardisty breathed his last at five this morning without regaining consciousness. His wound was a terrible one, the wound entering the right side of the head, passing along over the ear towards the back, fracturing the skull and shattering the brain severely. He never knew what hurt him. There is general regret in the camp, Dick being a favorite. Today is the fourth day of fighting, the only apparent loss inflicted on the enemy being the loss of ammunition, and the skirmishers advanced as usual this morning.

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