

to make up for the precious time that had been lost in our futile hunt for the valley. My battalion reached the trail Custer had followed, just in advance of the pack-train, and pretty close to a boggy place where I thought water for the animals could be gotten. So, perhaps fifteen minutes were consumed in watering them.

Just as my battalion pulled out on the trail from the watering-place, the advance
p. 16 mules of the pack-train floundered into the bog, going up to the packs in mud. However, I couldn't spare the time to assist in extricating them, as this is wholly one of those perquisites of the owner of that duty — i.e. guard to pack-train, and is by no means a labor of love.

About two miles from this bog, we passed a burning tepee, the tepee being quite handsomely decorated in colors in Indian art style. Dismounting from my horse I peeped into the tepee, and on a bed made of forks of (and small limbs of) trees, was stretched the body of an Indian warrior. As I hadn't time to investigate as to the causes of his having been made a 'good Indian', I remounted my horse and kept the battalion pushing on at a stiff walk.

A mile or so further on, I met a Sergt. Kanipe, coming from the adjutant or the regiment with orders -- written -- for the commander of the pack-train. I told the sergeant the pack-train was about seven miles back, and he could take the order to the commanding officer of the pack-train to hurry up the packs, as I had nothing to do with that -- that Capt. McDougall was in charge of the pack-train.

About a mile or so further on I met Trumpeter Martin, who had brought a written order, which I have. It has no date. It says: 'Benteen, come on; big village; be quick; bring packs. P.S. Bring pac's. COOKE'

It was about two miles from Major Reno first crossed the Little Big Horn that Martin met me, and about two and a half miles from the burning tepee. I did not know whose trail I was following. I asked Martin, after reading the note, about the village. He said the Indians were all 'skeddadling', therefore there was less necessity for me to go for the packs. I could hear no firing at that time.

I was then riding four or five hundred yards in advance of the battalion with my