

Just then, up the gorge, pell-mell came the troop which the commander had so fear-
lessly sallied forth with, and the preparations I had made allowed him and his troop
to come to a less frantic style of going. Then came the necessity of getting into as
good shape, and on as good ground for defense, as was possible, as 'twas clearly appar-
p. 19 ent that we were in for a good long fight. A movement could have been made down the
river in the direction Custer had gone, but we would all have been there yet! The
whole command could have gone as far as I went, but no farther. We were driven back.

From my position was my first sight of the village, and the only point from which
it could be seen. I saw about eighteen hundred tepees; no sign of troops or fighting,
at that point.

Slowly we fell back to just about the very point where Reno reached the bluffs
from his retreat from the valley, and with the little allowed us we formed a line which
stemmed the tide of Indian fire while the fight lasted, which was till dark on the 25th,
and until the retreat of the Indians, on the 26th of June.

The line was formed in an irregular ellipse. There was a flat where our pack
animals and horses were corraled, and the line formed around it in the shape of a U
(horseshoe), one prong of the horseshoe extending further than the other. The Indians
surrounded us there, and kept it pretty lively as long as they could see. I was in
the prong of the horseshoe; the short prong was turned in at right angles. Capt. Moylan
had that.

I had left one company on the ridge with orders to hold it at all hazards, but
that company got back as quick as the others. Then I sent Capt. Godfrey's company to
another hill to check the Indians till we could form. I saw Reno there. He came back
with me and talked with me. I don't know that he gave any orders to retire from the
advanced position. Orders were not necessary about that time. The first I knew as to
the formation of a line was when I told Lieut. Wallace to place his company at a spot
I pointed out; but he said he had no company — only three men. I told him to go there
with his three men, and I would see that he was supported; and from that the line was
formed. I thought then there were about twenty-five hundred Indians surrounding us,
but I think now that there were eight or nine thousand.