

was garrisoned by two companies of the 11th U. S. Infantry, with Captain O. B. Reed in command.

Leaving Fort Belknap, we proceeded down the Milk River by easy stages, driving only about ten miles a day, and had reached a point near the mouth of Frenchman's Creek, at ten o'clock, on about the first of August, 1880, when we found ourselves completely surrounded by savages, evidently preparing to attack. They occupied every hilltop and eminence within a radius of about one thousand yards, and numbered three hundred and fifty warriors, while there were about seventeen of us. Many of our party were in favor of immediately opening fire upon the Indians, hoping thus to turn them away. Such action would have been worse than madness. The moment had come for me to act. First reminding the men of their promise to obey my orders, I directed them to go about making camp for dinner, as if nothing unusual had ¹² happened, and put up the cook tent as usual. I ordered two of the men to partially round up the herd, while four or five men were ordered to lie down in a careless attitude, and lounge on the grass in plain view of the savages, and by all means, I cautioned no one to make any show whatever of alarm. I explained to the men, that I would ride out and meet the Indians, and would then act as circumstances required. That I would probably invite a few of the head chiefs to come and have dinner with me, and repeated the caution, that if they saw me returning, accompanied by any number of savages, to be sure and maintain an appearance of calm indifference. I then selected the largest group of savages and rode at an easy canter toward them, carrying my Winchester resting across my saddle bow. Drawing near to the Indians, I hailed them with the Sioux greeting, "How, mi ta ku ya pi!" (Hail, my kinsmen!) "I am glad to find myself once more among friends. Is ¹³ my brother, The Call, with you?" "Yes," they replied; and immediately an Indian left the group in search of Chief Call, with whom he soon returned. The Call, with whom I had been acquainted for many years, exhibited some surprise at meeting me, and, after