

(General Orders No. 39.)

Headquarters Department of the Platte,

Omaha, Nebraska, August 27, 1867.

The general commanding takes pleasure in announcing to this command the following decided successes on the part of troops, serving in this department, against greatly superior numbers of hostile Indians.

On the 26th June last, a war party of Sioux and Cheyennes combined, numbering between five and six hundred warriors, under the leadership of Roman Nose, surrounded and attacked a train of supplies, escorted by forty-eight men of the 7th cavalry, (temporarily serving in the department,) under Lieutenants S. M. Robbins and W. W. Cook. The Indians surrounded the train for three hours, making desperate efforts to capture it, but were gallantly resisted, and eventually repulsed with a loss of five warriors killed and several wounded. Our loss, two men slightly wounded. The officers and men engaged are commended by their commanding officer for good conduct in this their first engagement with hostile Indians.

On the 2d instant, Brevet Major James Powell, captain 27th United States Infantry, with twenty-five men of his company and five men of his company and five citizens, employed in getting wood, five miles from Fort Philip Kearney, found themselves cut off from the fort by a heavy force of Indians, estimated by cool heads to be about two thousand. They took position in a small corral, constructed of wagon beds and ox-yokes, and in this little hastily extemporized work these thirty men most gallantly and determinedly defended themselves for three and a half hours against overwhelming odds.

In their first assault the Indians were mounted. Driven back they dismounted, took their horses to the rear, stripped themselves, and returned to the assault, only to be again repulsed with great loss. Major Powell's party were relieved by the arrival of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel B. F. Smith, Major 27th United States infantry, with two companies of infantry and some artillery.

"Fortunately, Major Powell's party had just received the new breech-loading rifles," as Major Smith reports; "had they been armed with the old muzzle-loading arm they must all have been massacred before relief could have reached them."

Major Powell modestly claims sixty Indians killed and one hundred and twenty wounded. It is but just, however, to state that reliable citizens and others, well informed as to result and indications, assert their firm conviction that not