

of them, so that a scouting party went out to hunt them up. At any rate, ✓
the Bozeman Party and about thirty Indians met head-on, to their mutual
surprise, just south of the Yellowstone. The Indians fled but from that
time the expedition was under surveillance. In the days immediately follow-
ing, as the column threaded its way south through very rough country, oc-
curred a few brushes with small groups of Sioux. One day one of the pickets, ✓
a man named Rostwick, was ambushed and badly wounded. He made it into camp
but not before some of the warriors had ridden near enough to beat him
with their pony whips. *country coup*

On April 3d the Bozeman Party arrived in the valley of the Rosebud, at a
point thirty-two miles south of the Yellowstone and a mile and a half be-
low the mouth of Greenleaf Creek. They state that they found the valley
"one vast Indian trail, over which a village of several hundred lodges]
had passed but a few hours before, going upstream." The expedition cross-
ed the Rosebud and made camp on the edge of a fairly high bench, overlooking
and not far from the stream. As usual, the wagons were circled to form a ✓
corral and rifle-pits were dug encircling the camp. A few pits were dug
some distance out from the main line to shelter the men on outpost duty.

That night the camp was surrounded by Indians, said to have been in such
numbers that they scarcely bothered to conceal their movements. Before dawn]
on April 4th the Indians opened a heavy fire from points all around the
camp, making things very warm for the defenders, who could do little more
than lie low in the darkness. As daylight came the Indians' fire began to
tell on the stock inside the corral but now the white men could see to
shoot. The artillerymen undertook to shell the Indians out of the timber
bordering the Rosebud and soon assault parties were formed, to charge and
drive out those warriors who had gained lodgment in the nearby ravines.
This sending out charging parties was standard procedure with the expedi-
tion in all its fights. The riflemen in the pits and the artillery would
concentrate their fire on the objective. Then on signal the covering fire
would cease and the picked group would dash for its goal. In this fight
the assaults were successful, as indeed they were in the Bozeman Party's
other two major fights. The Indians took to their heels. Some warriors in
a ravine very near the entrenchments were taken by surprise, so that the
white men got right amongst them, managing to overtake and kill seven of
the red men. "A dense mass of Indians, apparently old men, women, and chil-
dren," had been observed, stationed atop a butte about a half mile from
the scene of the fight [this butte is easy to find], watching the struggle.
Now the expedition sent twenty-five men to charge this butte, which the In-
dians immediately vacated. Soon after this the Indians drew off and moved
up the Rosebud. The white men came out of their entrenchments to loot and
scalp the dead warriors' bodies.

It is claimed that in this fight about 900 cartridges and thirty rounds of
canister and shell were expended by the expedition, and that the Indians
fired more than three times as much ammunition. The expedition claimed that
no less than 600 and perhaps as many as 800 warriors took part in this
engagement! There are tales of finding pools of blood all around the camp
and of watching the red men carry off the bodies of numerous dead or wound-
ed comrades. It is stated that such was the confidence of the Indians that
"they had provided themselves with new coup sticks" and that, after the
fight, "these sticks were found standing thick in the sand all along their
[the Indians'] line." The Bozeman Party got through this red-hot (the way
they told it) engagement with one man shot through an arm plus a few horses
killed and some slightly wounded.