

The expedition resumed its march but, before leaving this camp, left lying about biscuits and bits of pemmican dosed with strychnine, also cartridges in which dynamite had been substituted for the powder. These fellows had few, if any, scruples when dealing with the red man.

The party had no trouble with Indians as it marched up the Rosebud. Arriving at "the Forks of the Rosebud" (near present-day Busby, as I figure it), they then crossed the Rosebud-Little Bighorn divide and, on April 11th, went into camp on the South Fork of Reno Creek. This campsite is described earlier in this letter.

On the morning of April 12th, preparatory to moving, the herders drove the stock down the hill to water. The herders were rather careless, allowing quite a few of the animals to cross the little stream and graze on the flat beyond. Suddenly "dense swarms of mounted Sioux" came tearing out of concealment some distance away and headed straight for the herd. Here the Bozeman Party came very near to being set afoot. But the artillery opened up from atop the hill and a lot of the men, who had been eating breakfast, ran down the slope and managed to drive off the Indians. The Indians shot dead one of the prospectors, a man named Yates, down on the flat.

Now the Indians occupied the ridges west and south of the hill and commenced a fire that drove the white men to their entrenchments. Again, charging parties were organized and succeeded in driving the Indians away from their vantage points. In one of these assaults "a savage known as the Brulé chief, who reined in his horse and tried to check the panic of his warriors," was grazed by a bullet and brought to the ground. As the Indian got to his feet one of the expedition succeeded despite a hot fire in reaching him and stabbed him to death. After several attempts another man succeeded in getting this Indian's scalp. Finally a couple of young warriors galloped back, raised the body between them, and got it away. This incident appears to have marked the close of the fight. It is reported that during this engagement six warriors were seen being carried, "either killed or badly wounded," from the field.

The expedition now marched south-west and, crossing the Little Bighorn River, camped on the benchland very near to present day Lodge Grass. Here Yates' body was buried beneath one of the breastworks. Now the weather turned very bad, the epizootic broke out among the horses, and rations began to run low. Indians were observed hanging about the area, so that the men could do no prospecting or even hunting. The feeling grew among the men that they had better start back to Bozeman. On April 17th the expedition started up Lodge Grass (old Grass Lodge) Creek but found such heavy going that it could make only three miles before time to make camp. At this camp several of the heaviest wagons were burned and some of the men dug a fake grave in which was buried a loaded shell. A concealed lanyard was rigged so that the shell would explode if the "grave" were disturbed--a fine booby trap, Model 1874.

The following day, as the party was strung out in column, moving west up the valley of Lodge Grass Creek, it was charged from all sides "by hundreds of mounted Indians, who burst upon them in swarms that darkened the land." The train was speedily corralled and the men fell to trying to halt the Indians' advance. At different times small parties of riflemen would rush out to drive the warriors from strong points that were too near the corral for comfort. In all cases the Indians ran before the white men could close with them. When the area of the corral had been cleared, the artillery shelled a number of Indians out of the timber along Lodge Grass