

sent Captain Weir with his troop to try to open communication with the former. Weir soon sent back word that he could no no further and that the Indians were getting around him, at the same time keeping up a heavy fire from his skirmish line. Reno then turned everything back to the first position he had taken on the bluff, which seemed the best for a defense, had the horses and mules driven into a depression, put his men, dismounted, on the crests of the hills making the depression, and had hardly completed these dispositions when the Indians attacked him furiously.

This was now about six o'clock in the evening and the ground was held with a further loss of eighteen killed and forty-six wounded, until the attack ceased about nine o'clock at night.

By this time the overwhelming numbers of the enemy rendered it improbable that the troops under Custer could undertake to rejoin those with Reno, so the latter began to dig rifle-pits, barricaded with dead horses and mules and boxes from the packs, to prepare for any further attack which might be made the next day. All night long the men kept working, while the Indians were holding a scalp dance, within their hearing, in the valley of the Little Big Horn below.

About half-past two o'clock in the morning, of June 26th, a most terrific rifle-fire was opened upon Reno's position and, as daylight increased, hordes of Indians were seen taking station upon high points completely surrounding the troops, so that men were struck on opposite sides of the lines from where the shots were fired. The fire did not slaken until half-past nine o'clock in the morning, when the Indians made a desperate charge upon the line held by Troops "H", and "M", coming to such close quarters as to touch with a "coup-stick", a man lying dead within the lines. This onslaught was repulsed by a charge from the line assaulted, led by Colonel Benteen.

The Indians also charged close enough to send their arrows into the line held by Troops "D", and "K", but they were driven back by a counter-charge of those troops, accompanied in person by Reno.