

The teamsters having become too demoralized to proceed, forty-one of them were discharged and soldiers were detailed to drive. The escort, now consisted of five companies of infantry, numbering eleven officers and one hundred and eighty-five men, under command of Lieutenant Colonel E. S. Otis, 22nd Infantry, again attempted to carry these much needed supplies to the garrison at Tongue River.

October 15th, on Spring Creek the Indians, increased to an estimated strength of from seven to eight hundred warriors, again attacked the train which, however, formed in compact lines, pressed on, the infantry escort charging the Indians repeatedly and driving them back, while the wagons slowly advanced. Three or four scouts from Colonel Miles' command were met here, having been attacked by Indians and one of their party killed. The train proceeded, with the escort skirmishing, until Clear Creek was reached, the point from which Captain Miner had previously been obliged to return. Here the Indians made the most determined attack, firing the prairie and the wagons being obliged to advance through the flames. Compactly arranged in four lines, the wagons proceeded, the entire escort being engaged in alternately charging the Indians, driving them back and then regaining the moving teams; three or four of the escort were wounded and a considerable number of Indian saddles empties.

On October 16th, whilst advancing, an Indian runner approached and left upon a hill the following communication:

Yellowstone.

I want to know what you are doing traveling on this road. You scare all the buffalo away. I want to hunt in this place. I want you to turn back from here. If you don't I will fight you again. I want you to leave what you have got here and turn back from here.

I am your friend,

Sitting Bull

I mean all the rations you have got and some powder. Wish you would write as soon as you can.