

I recognised some gray horses mounted by men in military blouses and some of them in white hats. They were, I thought, going out of the valley, and those that had already crossed the river were going up a very steep bluff, while others were crossing after them. I saw one man with a buckskin jacket, pants, top boots, and white hat, and felt quite sure I recognised him as Captain Tom Custer, which convinced me that the cavalrymen were of our command.

"With this conviction I stepped boldly out on the bank and called to Captain Custer, 'Tom, don't leave us here!' The distance was only a few yards and my call was answered by an infernal yell and a discharge of 300 or 400 shots. I then discovered my mistake and found the savages were clad in clothes and mounted on horses which they had captured from our men. Myself and the soldier jumped into the bushes (the bullets mowing down the branches at every volley) and crawled off to get out of range of the fire. In doing so we moved to the top branches of the undergrowth, and the Indians on the top of the bluff fired where they saw the commotion and thus covered us with their rifles. We now decided to cross a clearing of about twenty yards and gain another wood, but before doing this I took the precaution to look out. The prospect was terribly discouraging, for on our immediate right, not more than fifty yards distant, I saw four or five Indians galloping towards us. Near by there were two cottonwood stumps nearly touched each other, and behind this slender barricade myself and the soldier knelt down, he with his carbine and I with my revolver, ready to do for a few of the savages before they could kill us. We determined not to fire until they came so near that we could miss them, and there we waited. I had given up hope and made my mind up to it that the end had come. They had not seen us, and when the foremost man was just abreast of me and about ten yards distant I fired.

"They came in Indian file, and at my fire they turned a rightabout and were making off, when Private O'Neill fired his carbine at the second savage, who at that moment was reining his pony to turn him back. The private's eye was true and his carbine trusty, for Mr. Indian dropped his rein, threw up his paws and laid down on the grass to sleep his long sleep. The gentleman I greeted rode a short distance and then did likewise. The rest of the party rode on, turned the corner of the wood and disappeared. We remained in our position, expecting every moment that a hundred desperate savages would appear to put an end to us. During all this time the fire from the bluffs continued, but after we had fired our shots it ceased and we retired to the thicket, where we awaited our fate, possessed alternately by hope and despair. From our position we could see the Indians on the bluffs, their horses picketed under cover of the hill, and a line of sharpshooters, sitting flat on their stomachs. We could hear the battle going on above us on the hills, the continued rattle of the musketry, the cheering of our command and the shout ing of the savages. Our hopes revived when we heard the familiar cheer of our comrades, but despondency followed fast, for we discovered that our wood was on fire.

"The sharp crackling of the burning timber approached nearer and nearer with awful rapidity, and we had to shift our position. We crawled almost to the edge of the wood, when we discovered that the fiends had fired both sides. We moved around until we found a thick cluster of what they call bull berry trees, under which we crept.

"The grass on the edge of this place was very green, and as it had been raining a little before, and there was no wind, when the fire approached our hiding place it ran very slowly, so that I was enabled to smother it with my gauntlet gloves. The fire consumed all the underwood around us, and was almost expended by this time.

"There we were in a little oasis, surrounded by fire, but comparatively safe from the element, and with the advantage of seeing almost everything around us without being seen. We could see savages going backward and forward, and one standing on picket no more than seventy or eighty yards from us, evidently put there to watch the progress of the fire. At about four o'clock p.m., this picket fired four pistol shot in the air at regular intervals from each other, which I interpreted as a signal of some kind. Soon after this fire we heard the powerful voice of a savage crying out, making the same sound four times, and after those two signals we saw 200 or more savages leave the bluffs and ford the river, evidently leaving the ground. About one hour after the same double signals were again repeated, and many mounted Indians left at a gallop. Soon the remainder of those left on the bluffs also retired.

"Hope now revived, the musketry rattle ceased and only now and then we could hear a far off shot. By six o'clock everything around us was apparently quiet, and no evidence or signs of any Indians were near us. We supposed the regiment had left the field, and all that remained for us to do was to wait for the night and then pass the river and take the route for the Yellowstone river, and there construct a raft and descend to the mouth of Powder river, our supply camp. Of course during the thirty-six hours that we were in suspense we had neither water nor food; at ten o'clock p.m., we dropped ourselves into the river, the water reaching our waists, crossed it twice and carefully crawled up the bluffs and finally reached the broken, high country, took our direction and slowly and cautiously proceeded southward.

"After marching two miles I thought I would go up a very high hill to look around and see if we could discover any signs of our command, and on looking around I saw a fire on my left, and in the direction where we supposed the command was fighting during the day, probably two miles from us. Of course we made two conjectures on this fire—it might be the Indian fire and it might be from our command. The only way to ascertain was to approach it cautiously and trust to chance. Accordingly we descended the hill, took the direction of the fire, climbing another and another hill; we listened for a while and then proceeded on for a mile or more, when on the top of a hill we again stopped and listened. We could hear voices, but not distinctly enough to tell whether they were savages or our command. We proceeded a little further and heard the bray of a mule, and soon after the distinct voice of a sentry challenging with the familiar words, "Halt! Who goes there?" The challenge was not addressed to us, as we were too far off to be seen by the picket, and it was too dark, but this gave us courage to continue our course and approach, though carefully, least we should run into some Indians again.

"We were about 200 yards from the fire, and I resolved to call out to the picket and tell him who I was. I told my companion to be ready to follow after me, and when I had well surveyed the ground I cried out, "Picket, don't fire; it is Lieut. De Rudio and Private O'Neill," and started to run.

We received an answer in a loud cheer from all the members of the picket and Lieut. Varnum. This officer, one of the bravest and most efficient, came at once to me and was very happy to see me again, after having counted me among the dead, and his joy affected me so much that I entirely forgot the adventures of the thirty six hours just past, and was happy to be once more in the company of my brave comrades.

"My first question was about the condition of the regiment. I was in hopes that we were the only sufferers, but I was not long allowed to remain in doubt. Lieutenant Varnum said he knew nothing of the five companies under Custer, and that our command had sustained a loss in Lieutenants McIntosh and Hodgson. My dear friend Varnum now procured me some coffee and hard bread, but I was so happy and excited over my escape that I could eat nothing, but drank the coffee. It was about two o'clock a.m., when I got into camp and I soon after tried to go to sleep; but though I had not slept for two nights I could not close my eyes. I talked with Lieutenant Varnum about the battle, narrated to him the adventures and narrow escapes I had had. Morning soon came and I went to see the officers and told them that the Indians had left, and I supposed there would not be any attack made by them that morning.

"There, my dear friend, you have my personal story of the great fight, and the rest you will learn from the newspapers. At eight o'clock we saw cavalry approaching, first a few scouts and then a dense column, and soon learned it was General Brisbin's command coming up to our relief. Presently a long line of infantry appeared on the plain and General Gibbon came up. Ah! who that was there will ever forget how our hearts thrilled at sight of those blue coats, and when Generals Gibbon and Terry rode into our camp men went like children.

"Yours truly,

CHARLES C. DE RUDIO.

"P. S.—I should do injustice to my feelings if I should omit to mention the fidelity and bravery of Private O'Neill. He faithfully obeyed me and stood by me like a brother. I shall never cease to remember him and his services to me during our dangerous companionship."

#### Canadian Cattle in England.

The following letter appeared in the London papers of the 27th:—

Sir,—Yesterday quite a sensation was caused in our cattle market by the arrival of 102 Canadian cattle, splendid animals in fine condition, equal in quality to our best English breeds; they came ex *Scotland* from Montreal, shipped by Messrs. Harbour and Coghlin to the consignment of Messrs. Richard Hall and Sons, of Liverpool, who have thus opened out another source of our food supplies. They were fifteen days on the journey, and were landed at Thames Haven without a single accident. They realized 6s. to 6s 4d. to sink the offal, and will no doubt result in a very large and regular supply, and thus tend to lower the price of that prop of old England—roast beef.

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM MALTROUSE.

Metropolitan Meat Market,  
Smithfield, July 25th.

The popularity of the Wimbledon prize shooting is annually increasing. This year the number of entries for the Queen's prize ran as high as 2,323, for the St. George prize 1,943.