

ance corps of the Queen's Own was particularly prominent in answering the numerous calls from the front for assistance many times having to traverse ground that was raked by the enemy's fire. Brigade-Surgeon Strange, I.S.C., and Surgeon Lesslie, Q.O.R., rendered willing and valuable assistance to the wounded, both on the field and in the temporary hospital that was established in the waggon laager."

As to the conclusion of the action, the brigadier remarked in his report: "At eleven o'clock, that is, six hours after the beginning of the engagement, our flank and rear were clear, but the position we occupied was not tenable over night, while both guns were practically useless through broken trails, and the wounded required proper attention. Further, the object of the reconnoissance had been accomplished, inasmuch as Poundmaker had declared his intentions. But Big Bear, or at least his men, had effected a junction before my arrival, as the number of the enemy was fully five hundred fighting men, including some fifty half-breeds. I therefore concluded to withdraw and return at once to Battleford in case a counter-attack might be made on that place."

These extracts give a better idea than could otherwise be conveyed of the objects sought to be obtained by the movement from Battleford, and of the results as they appeared to the officer in command, at the time. Of course Colonel Otter was mistaken in supposing that Big Bear or any of his men had joined Poundmaker, for they were still many miles away, in the Fort Pitt district, but the force with Poundmaker was much larger than at first supposed.

About two months from the date of the fight it was the privilege of the compiler of this history to make a thorough inspection of the battlefield of Cut Knife Hill in company with two of the principal actors in the engagement, as already stated. A strong mounted force had been despatched from Battleford by General Middleton to try and effect the arrest of some of the men of Poundmaker's band, still at large, who were wanted for various criminal acts. A small party of those connected with this column availed themselves of the opportunity to ride over to Cut Knife Hill. The battlefield was a glacis-like hill side. With the exception of a very shallow depression or coulee a little to the rear of the centre of the position held by Colonel Otter's men, and which coulee, the day of the fight, was occupied by the corral and hospital, there was no cover from the surrounding elevations except a few buffalo "wallows." The position held, as pointed out by Lieutenant-Colonel Herchmer and Major Short, and as clearly indicated by the rows of empty cartridge shells and the holes cut by the gun trails in the sod on recoil, was in the shape of a horseshoe, the toe up-hill, the heel on the creek at the bottom of the hill. The rim of the horseshoe was defined by ravines or coulees, all connected in such a way that it would be possible for the Indians, who occupied these natural trenches to move under their cover completely round both flanks and across the front of the position of the