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Article Summary: The engagements at Mud Springs and Rush Creek did not cause major setbacks to either the army or the Cheyennes and Sioux. The army protected the emigrant trail and the transcontinental telegraph while the Indians continued to move toward the Powder River. Fighting resumed and intensified in the aftermath of these battles.

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Photographs / Images: Mud Springs Station Pony Express marker erected in 1939; ground plan of Mud Springs Station drawn by Lieutenant Caspar Collins; photo of Mud Springs in 1929 (Emil Kopac, Oshkosh, Nebraska); Colonel William O Collins, commander of the troops at Mud Springs and Rush Creek; painted view of Mud Springs by an enlisted man in the Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry; site of the Battle of Rush Creek today (author photo); Mud Springs area, 1972

*"We had a terribly hard time letting them go"*

# The Battles of Mud Springs & Rush Creek

February 1865

*By John D. McDermott*

About twenty-five miles north of Sidney and about eight miles northwest of Dalton is one of the state of Nebraska's least-known and least-visited historic properties, the site of Mud Springs Station. A plot 150 by 150 feet preserves the ground once occupied by the Mud Springs Pony Express Station, which later became the army's telegraph outpost. Archeological evidence indicates periodic occupation of the site for several thousand years. Apparently the stopping place earned its name because buffalo liked to wallow in its waters, churning up sediment and creating a mud flat, later regenerated by soldier and emigrant wagons and stock.<sup>1</sup>

Travelers headed for Oregon and California began using the springs in the mid-1850s. Beyond the forks of the Platte River, some emigrants continued to follow the South Platte to Julesburg before heading north to Courthouse Rock. This route, while twenty-five miles longer, avoided the rough country at Ash Hollow and the alkali flats. For those coming from the south the so-called "Jules Cutoff" provided a more direct route to Fort Laramie. In use as early as 1854 the road moved northwest, paralleling Lodgepole Creek, then turned due north at present-day Sidney, Nebraska. The first stop was Mud Springs, one of the few water sources on the trail between Lodgepole Creek and the North Platte. In 1860 the Pony Ex-

press established a home station there. In 1861 Mud Springs became a station for the transcontinental telegraph, becoming operative on July 15.<sup>2</sup>

In his own unique fashion the English explorer Richard Burton described the Pony Express station at Mud Springs in 1860:

"[It] was not unlike an Egyptian fellah's hut. The material was sod, half peat with vegetable matter. . . . Cedar timber, brought from the neighboring hills, formed the roof. The only accommodation was an open shed, with a sort of doorless dormitory by its side. . . . Dreading the dormitory—if it be true that the sultan of fleas inhabits Jaffa and his vizier Grand Cairo, it is certain that his vermin officials have settled *pro tem.* on Emigration Road—I cast about for a quieter retreat. Fortune favored me by pointing out the body of a dismantled wagon."<sup>3</sup>

Gen. Robert B. Mitchell, who in 1864 commanded the District of Nebraska, had been unsuccessful in obtaining a promise of peace during several councils with the Sioux and feared conflict.<sup>4</sup> Consequently in late summer he ordered the establishment of military garrisons of varying size at Julesburg, Mud Springs, Ficklin's Springs, and Scott's Bluff to protect the emigrant trail and the telegraph from possible Indian attack. A detachment of nine Ohio soldiers watched after things at Mud Springs Station. Caspar Collins drew a ground plan of the newly reconstituted outpost as it appeared in 1864 showing two log buildings. One structure measured thirty-five by sixteen feet, with a telegraph office and squad room dividing the building nearly in half. The second was labeled a stable and measured forty by twenty feet.<sup>5</sup>

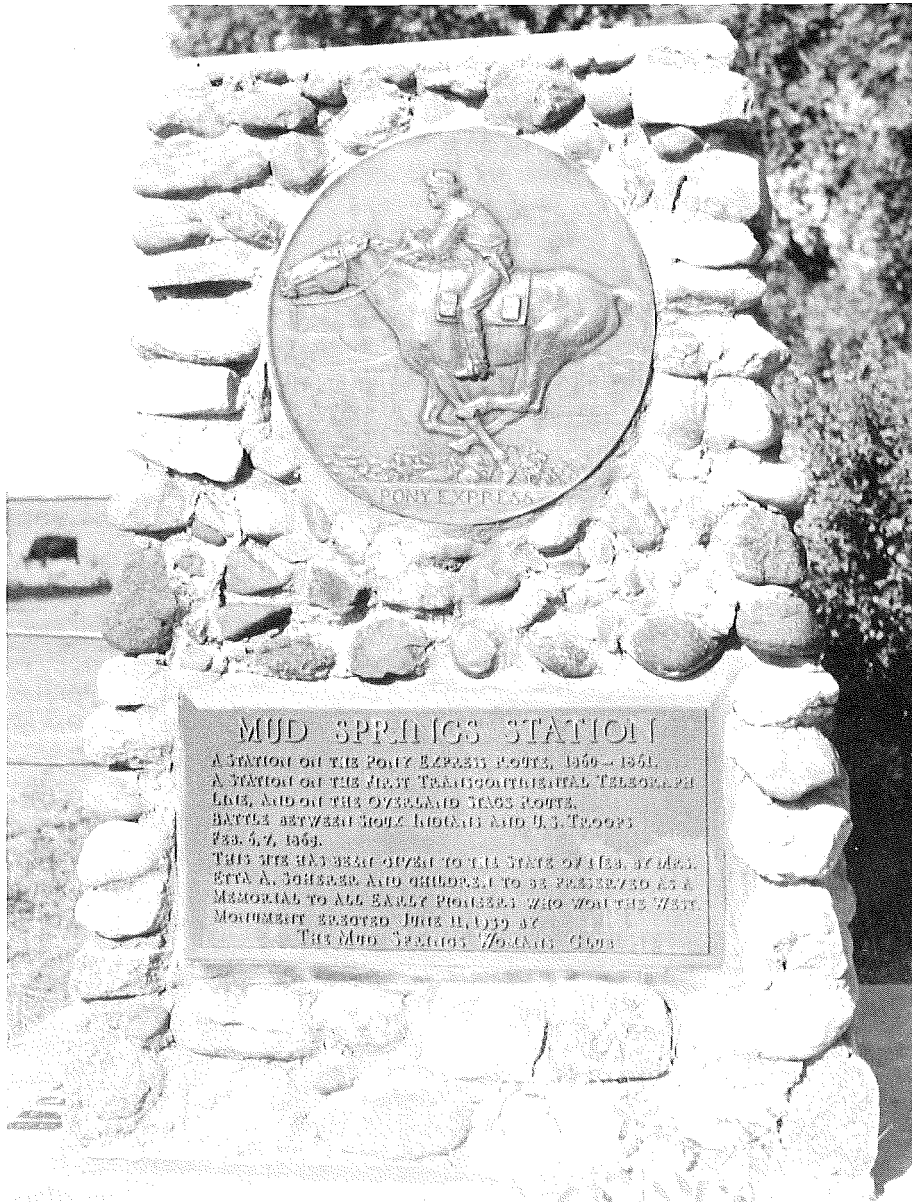
Mitchell correctly predicted Indian trouble. When Col. John M. Chivington and the Third Colorado Volunteers swept down on Black Kettle's village at Sand Creek on November 29, the fire that spread to the central and northern Plains had been ignited. Following the massacre at Sand Creek the Cheyenne and their Sioux and Arapaho allies gathered to seek vengeance. Leading the former were Leg-in-the-Water, Little Robe, and a reluctant Black Kettle. Spotted Tail's and Pawnee Killer's Brulé and Oglala Sioux joined the camp, as did some Northern Arapahos. Prominent among the Cheyenne Dog Soldiers were Tall Bull, White Horse, and Bull Bear. George and Charles Bent, the half-Cheyenne sons of William Bent, were also present and would take an increasingly influential role in the fighting.<sup>6</sup>

The first target was Julesburg, the division headquarters of the Overland Stage Company and an important station of the Pacific Telegraph. As a center for communications and jumping off place for the Colorado gold fields or westward migration to Oregon, California, Utah, and Montana Territory, Julesburg was one of the most important travel points in the region. Less than a mile west of town on the south side of the South Platte River opposite the mouth of Lodgepole Creek was Camp Rankin, a one-company post garrisoned by Company F of the Seventh Iowa Volunteer Cavalry.<sup>7</sup>

On the morning of January 7, the avengers, led by Big Crow, chief of the Cheyenne Crooked Lance Soldiers, lured a small force from the fort. In the ensuing fight the warriors killed four

*John D. McDermott, former director of policy, President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, lives in Sheridan, Wyoming. His The Warrior Trail: Handbook on the Indian Wars of the West is forthcoming from the University of Nebraska Press.*

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Pony Express marker erected in 1939. NSHS Museum Collections

noncommissioned officers and eleven enlisted men, while the rest sacked Julesburg. In response General Mitchell led 640 men on an unsuccessful twelve-day hunt for the raiders, covering 360 miles. Failing contact he ordered his troops to fire the prairie, which had little, if any, strategic effect on the Sioux and Cheyenne.<sup>8</sup> The raiders returned to Julesburg on the morning of February 2

to finish what they had begun. Some witnesses claimed that between 1,500 and 2,500 warriors participated in the second attack. Troops from the post skirmished with the attackers but were unable to drive them away. When it was over, what had been Julesburg lay in smoldering ruins. The Sioux and Cheyennes had carried off or destroyed 3,500 sacks of corn and left with hundreds of

head of stock. Ben Holladay claimed \$115,000 in damages.<sup>9</sup>

While the Sand Creek avengers headed north, the military restricted travel along the road except for one-hundred-wagon caravans escorted by troops. Apparently the abrupt departure of the Indians had been due to the approach of Col. Robert R. Livingston from Cottonwood Springs with a large detachment of First Nebraska Cavalry and Seventh Iowa Cavalry. The Cheyennes and Sioux decided to move hundreds of miles north to the Tongue and Powder River areas.

On the road between the North and South Platte rivers, there were two stations, one at Lodgepole Creek and one at Mud Springs. On February 3 the Indian advance party began appearing in great numbers on Lodgepole Creek and quickly destroyed the station there. The telegraph operator was absent at the time, and, when he returned to see the building in flames, quickly departed for Mud Springs. The large number of wagons filled with plunder hampered the movements of the Indian party. While the men had secured ponies to the vehicles with long rawhide and twisted buffalo-hair lariats, they were unable to make much progress as the animals zig-zagged over the plains. Warriors finally abandoned the wagons, loading their booty on their ponies' backs. The next day they reached Mud Springs.<sup>10</sup>

The little compound at Mud Springs was utterly indefensible, being surrounded by hills and knolls full of gullies, allowing attackers to creep up where they could not be seen or reached by cavalry charge. In residence at Mud Springs were nine soldiers and Martin Hogan, a telegraph operator. To one soldier, Winfield S. Davis of Company H, Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, it was "god forsaken country," where the only amusements were playing cards and fighting Indians and the only variation in diet was to have bread and coffee for one meal and coffee and bread for the next.<sup>11</sup> Also present at Mud Springs Station were four stock herders

for Creighton and Hoel, who had a place four miles distant on Pumpkin Creek. In the first attack warriors stole the stock from the corral, including one mule and three horses belonging to the government and ten or fifteen ponies and horses belonging to Creighton and Hoel. They also appropriated the cowmen's nearby cattle herd.<sup>12</sup>

About four o'clock Saturday afternoon, February 4, Western Subdistrict Commander William O. Collins learned

about the attack by telegraph.<sup>13</sup> He immediately ordered 1st Lt. William Ellsworth and thirty-six men of Company H, Eleventh Ohio, from Camp Mitchell on an all-night ride to cover the fifty miles to Mud Springs and so reach the outpost by daylight the next morning. At 7 P.M. that evening Collins led his own force out of Fort Laramie. The troops numbered 120 men, consisting of a detachment of Company D, Seventh Iowa Cavalry, officered by Capt. William

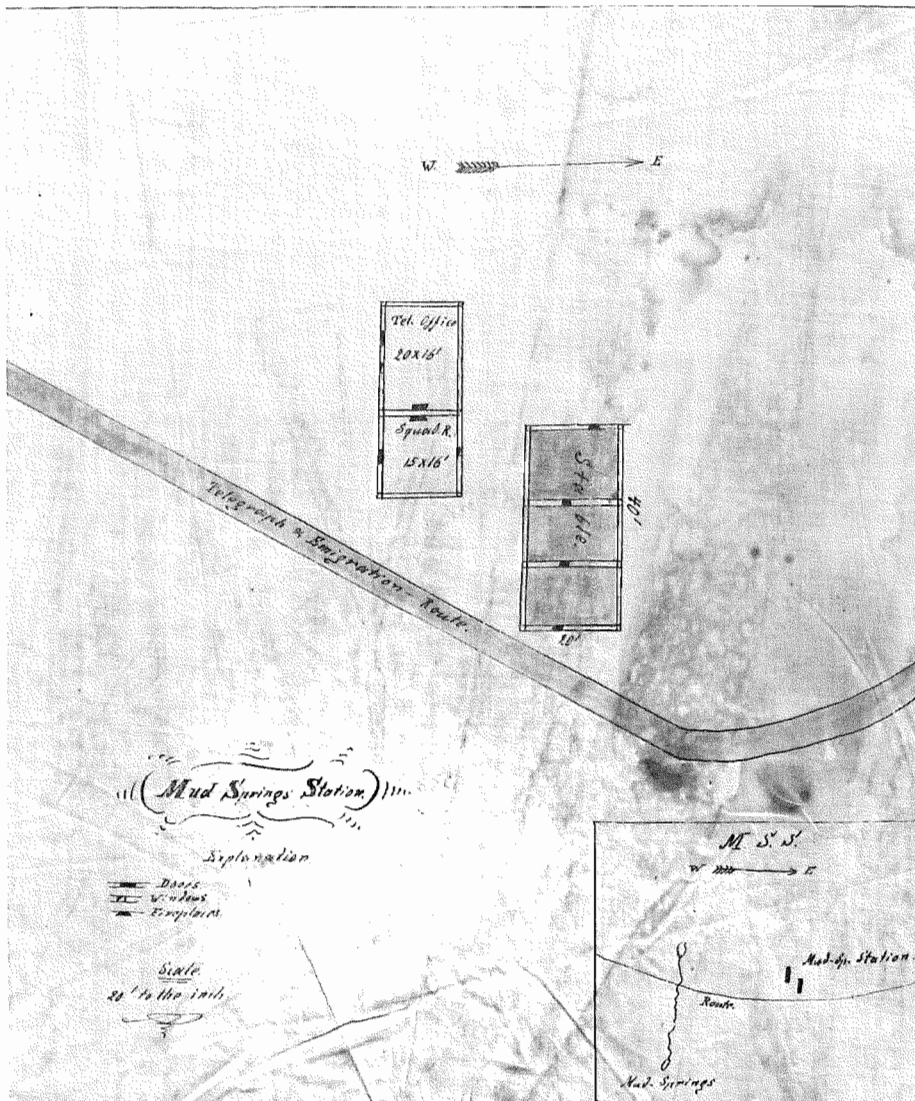
D. Fouts and Lt. Dudley L. Haywood, another detailed from Company I, Eleventh Ohio, under the command of Capt. Jacob F. Apt and Lts. Theodore B. Harland and John R. Moloney, and a third unit formed from Companies A, B, C, and D of the First Battalion, Eleventh Ohio, led by 1st Lt. Robert F. Patton and 2nd Lt. John V. Herriman. Traveling all night Collins's command reached Fort Mitchell about 11 A.M. on February 5. Here the men rested and refreshed themselves and their mounts. About 7 P.M. they resumed the march, Collins and twenty-five men hurrying ahead of the main column, which followed under the command of Captain Fouts of the Seventh Iowa.<sup>14</sup>

Ellsworth's reinforcements made it to Mud Springs in the wee hours of February 5.<sup>15</sup> Before drawing close Ellsworth ordered the bugler to sound a call to let the besieged know that help was at hand. David Peck of Company H reported the happy reunion:

When . . . the doors were thrown open and an old soldier named [William] Idlet cried for joy. The boys knew that it was the intention of the Indians to crawl up around the building in the night, and if a head appeared it would be sure death.<sup>16</sup>

Just before daylight, a group of young warriors made a successful raid on the corral and the new bunch of animals now held there. As horses and mules departed, their pursuers did their best to touch them with whip or bow, thus establishing ownership, which the rest recognized.<sup>17</sup>

At daylight sixteen of the relief party ascended a bluff in the rear of the station to prevent the Indians from getting too close. The men had fired several rounds at the raiders as they galloped from one bluff to another, when suddenly about five hundred warriors rose from behind the creek bank and opened fire. One participant described the barrage as like a "shower of hail-stone."<sup>18</sup> In the face of the intense fire the soldiers received the order to retreat. As the men formed to go, two brothers, standing on either side of



Lt. Caspar Collins drew this ground plan of Mud Springs Station.  
Courtesy Colorado State University

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Emil Kopac of Oshkosh, Nebraska, photographed Mud Springs in 1929. NSHS Museum Collections

David Peck, were hit. One received a shoulder wound that dropped and stunned him, but he was soon on his feet and running. Peck, who had been bringing up the rear, opened the station door to let him in. Upon entering the man collapsed. His comrades placed him in a bunk, where he eventually received medical attention from Assistant Surgeon Zeigler, who arrived a few hours later. The other brother had been shot in the hip, the ball lodging in his groin and making it difficult for him to move. Peck reported that while the defenders in the station looked on helplessly, they “could see the Indians jumping up, waving their scalping knives and yelling like demons” in anticipation of the kill.<sup>19</sup>

The wounded man lay near a depression and had the strength to roll himself over into it and draw his revolver. In the meantime Sgt. William Hall, a veteran who had seen service on Civil War battlefields and who had recently reenlisted in the company, volunteered to bring the man in. According to Peck, Hall “took off his revolver belt and hung it on a peg, as unconcerned as though he was going to his supper.” Officers tried to dissuade him as the mission appeared suicidal, but Hall opened the

door, moved quickly to the man, placed him on his shoulder, and brought him safely into the house without mishap. Peck later mused, “I think the hand of Providence was surely manifested there.”<sup>20</sup> Hall’s efforts went for naught, however, as the man later died of his wounds and found a resting place under a mound on the plains. The other brother survived. At dusk the raiders withdrew, and the men rested.

As daylight broke over the winter scene on the morning of February 6, Colonel Collins and his command from Fort Laramie struggled in. Having marched for two nights and a day in bitter cold with no sleep and but little rest, the troops were debilitated, and many of them had their ears and feet badly frozen. As the reinforcements arrived, Cheyenne and Sioux warriors swarmed over the bluffs, laying down a desultory fire in an effort to pick off some of the new arrivals before they reached the compound.<sup>21</sup>

Collins estimated that the number of warriors engaged that day was from 500 to 1,000, with the latter probably a truer figure. He declared that the raiders were armed with rifles, revolvers, and bows and arrows, they had plenty of ammunition (minié balls were common), and

they were bold and brave. He noted that the Indians generally shot too high, or else his command would have suffered many more casualties. He also saw that many of the attackers rode American horses and believed there were white men or Mexicans among them. Some enlisted men of the Eleventh Ohio reported seeing a white man with long red hair and whiskers. Carrying a flag representing the Lone Star of Texas, or, as one of them put it, “a secesh flag,” he rode a sorrel horse with a bobtail, which seemed to have the fleetness of the wind.<sup>22</sup>

Collins’s troops hastily formed a corral out of four wagons, securing their stock. The Indians made several attempts during the day to stampede the horses and mules out of the corral but were not successful, as heavy fire from the soldiers’ Spencers turned them back. During the day Collins telegraphed Fort Laramie to send an artillery piece, since he found it difficult to dislodge warriors from their sheltered positions in the gullies and ravines that encompassed the station.

As fighting progressed, there evolved what Collins was later to call a game of “bo-peep.” In his report to his superiors Collins explained as follows:

We found it necessary to imitate the Indians, get under banks and creep up to favorable position, watch for an Indian's head, and shoot the moment it was shown and pop down at the flash of his gun. The men got quite handy at this game and soon made any ground occupied by Indians too hot for them. It was common to see a soldier and an Indian playing bo-peep in this manner for half an hour at a time.<sup>23</sup>

At one point two hundred warriors gathered behind a hill and in its ravines, where they could come within seventy-five yards of the station buildings. From there they sent a shower of arrows that fell into the corral at an angle of about forty-five degrees, wounding many animals. The destruction dictated quick action, and Collins ordered two parties, one afoot and one mounted, to clear the area. The rush was successful, and the men took possession of the hill and dug a rifle pit on its highest point, ending the threat from that quarter.

After about four hours of fighting, the troops began to press the raiders back in all directions, and the Cheyennes and Sioux finally withdrew. Miles away the Indians devoted their remaining energies to moving their camp across the frozen North Platte River to the high country at the head of Brown's Creek. Their plan was to rest the ponies for four days before making the long, difficult march through the Sand Hills to the next camping place and the Black Hills. The Cheyennes and Sioux danced that night under a full moon. George Bent remembered that none of his kinsmen had been killed that day.<sup>24</sup>

Army casualties for February 6 were seven wounded, three seriously, and some horses and mules killed. Collins opined that Indian losses numbered about thirty but explained he could not be certain because the attackers immediately carried off their dead and wounded, noting that some warriors tied themselves to their mounts so in case of death or disablement their horses would carry them away. After dark Collins sent out a party to repair the telegraph line west to Fort Laramie by taking wire from downed poles to



**Col. William O. Collins, commander of the troops at Mud Springs and Rush Creek.**  
Courtesy Colorado State University

the east. During the night the command fortified the compound and made plans to take the offensive. This was possible because of the arrival under cover of darkness of Lt. William Brown and about fifty men of the Eleventh Ohio towing a twelve-pounder mountain howitzer. Brown and his men had made the trip from Fort Laramie in thirty-four hours.<sup>25</sup>

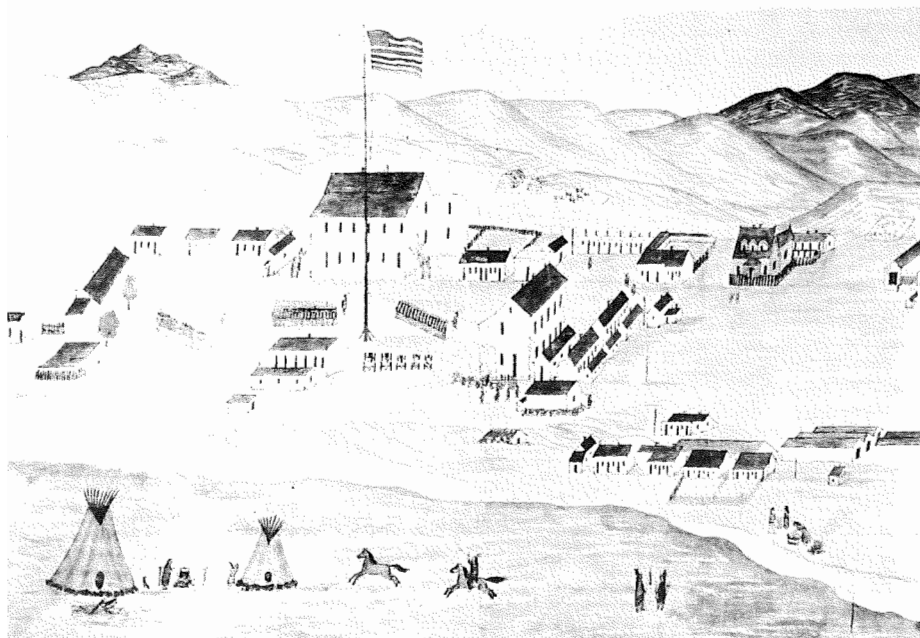
On February 7, Collins sent out a scouting party to determine the Indians' whereabouts, and the next morning troops moved forward to try to catch the

Cheyennes and their allies. As Pvt. George Nelson remembered, "Catching them was an easy enough matter, but we had a terribly hard time letting them go."<sup>26</sup> Captain Fouts and his company stayed behind to guard the station. The pursuing party moved rapidly, scouts in front and rear and on the flanks. No Indians were in sight, but the whole country showed evidence of movement, its surface being engraved from the passage of travois. The trails appeared to concentrate and point to Rush Creek about fifteen miles to the northeast.

Scouts found the avengers' deserted camp about ten miles out, located in a sheltered valley that opened toward the North Platte River. Protected by rocky precipices the camping place had good grass and clear water, its source being what the scouts called Rock Creek Springs. Evidence indicated that the camp had been recently abandoned and that its inhabitants had been there about three days in great numbers. The village had covered several miles, and scattered everywhere were flour sacks, quantities of codfish, and the spoils from ranches and trains. Empty oyster, meat, and fruit cans were plentiful, and over one hundred beef cattle had been slaughtered to feed the multitude. The column continued to follow the broad swath made by thousands of travois and tipi poles. In a few miles the men reached the valley of the North Platte River near the mouth of Rush Creek, now known as Cedar Creek, in Morrill County. As they approached the river, they saw Indian horsemen on the other side grazing their stock. Nowhere to be seen were women, children, dogs, and tipis, for the Cheyenne and Sioux camp was beyond the bluffs about five miles to the north.<sup>27</sup>

As troops neared the frozen river, they saw warriors riding out from the hills to meet them. One observer estimated that the Indians outnumbered the soldiers fifty to one. Looking through his field glass, Collins guessed that two thousand Cheyennes and Sioux were in his front, which soon became

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**The largest contingent of reinforcements for Mud Springs came from Fort Laramie. An enlisted man in the Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry painted this view.**  
Courtesy American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming

his flanks and rear as well, as the Cheyennes and Sioux crossed the frozen river above and below the command to surround it on every side. The riders came in such numbers that one volunteer remembered that in their crossing the ice on the river was literally black with them.<sup>28</sup>

From the high bluffs on the opposite side of the river another person looked through field glasses. George Bent remembered the scene:

Along the road on the south side of the river I could see a train of white-topped wagons crawling slowly along, guarded by cavalry, and toward this train the warriors were hurrying, looking like a swarm of little black ants crawling across the ice of the Platte. . . . I saw that the soldiers had corralled their wagons on the south bank, at the mouth of the little creek on whose upper waters our village had stood the day before. The wagons were corralled on a bit of level ground, but all around the wagons were little knolls and sand ridges, and the soldiers hastily dug rifle pits among these hillocks and ridges and formed a circle of defense all about the wagons. The warriors in strong force, as soon as they had assembled on the south bank of the river, charged at full speed

across the knolls and ridges, yelling and shooting as they came.<sup>29</sup>

For the moment Lieutenant Brown's howitzer held them back, a few effective shots scattering those who had compacted in crossing. But on they came, and troops barely had time to corral the train before the warriors were upon them. Quickly the troops dug in, scooping out the sandy soil and throwing it up in front to make a wall. By the time the battle commenced, the breastworks were well under way. In his report Collins described the action:

The position chosen was the best we could get but there were many little sand ridges and hollows under cover of which they could approach us. A very great change had come over the men however and they were now cool, had confidence in their officers, obeyed orders, and went to work with a will. Sharpshooters were pushed out to the hillock commanding the camp occupied and rifles pits dug upon them. The Indians are the best skirmishers in the world. We were not strong enough to charge or scatter. It was necessary to be prudent and at first take the defensive. They dashed up very boldly but soon fell back from our bullets and re-

sorted to their old game of skulking and sharpshooting. At this they were well met by our men.<sup>30</sup>

At one point, the Cheyennes and Sioux reached a little knoll about four hundred yards from the breastworks, taking cover in a long, low gulch where the sagebrush had grown tall and fallen dead grass provided good cover. Warriors carried one another to the spot, two mounting a single horse, one of them slipping off while the other raced through the gully. Because the place commanded the volunteers' position, it had to be taken. To do so Collins detailed sixteen mounted men, part from the detachment of Company D, Seventh Iowa Cavalry, and part from a detachment of the First Battalion of the Eleventh Ohio. Orders were to charge at full speed with revolvers in hand, clear out the Indians, and return immediately. Lt. Robert Patton of the Eleventh Ohio was placed in command.<sup>31</sup>

Patton gave the command, "Forward," and the men rushed into the gully, the Cheyennes and Sioux exiting rapidly. A Cheyenne youngster, Yellow Nose, was shot in the breast but was able to make his escape flattened on the back of his pony.<sup>32</sup>

After emptying the two revolvers that each man carried, the attacking party began to return to the breastworks. In the meantime 150 to 200 Cheyennes and Sioux who occupied the rising ground beyond the contested hillock swarmed down to save their companions, engaging the soldiers in a short hand-to-hand fight. From the breastworks the volunteers delivered a thunderous volley, checking the Indian advance and enabling the charging squad to scramble back to safety. According to army participants many warriors were killed and wounded in this charge. In the foray the volunteers lost two men: Pvt. John A. Harris of Company D, Seventh Iowa Cavalry, and Pvt. William H. Hartshorn of Company C, Eleventh Ohio. Both had been on the frontier more than three years and were valued fighters.<sup>33</sup>

What happened to Hartshorn was not uncommon in the Indian Wars. He rode a horse that was unruly, the animal always running away at the first opportunity. He was asked not to ride the horse but declined another mount. In the charge, true to its nature, Hartshorn's horse bolted, the Indians opening a way to let it through. Witnesses said that Hartshorn hit his horse on the side of the head, trying to turn it around, but the warriors enveloped him before he could gain control. Later a small party went out and brought in Harris's body, the mission being accomplished soon enough to keep the warriors from scalping him or taking his weapons or clothing. The men were not successful in reaching Hartshorn's remains. Military casualties for the day, besides the two men killed, included nine wounded.<sup>34</sup>

At the end of the day, as the Cheyennes and Sioux withdrew across the North Platte, Collins detailed men to water the horses and mules on Rush Creek. By mistake some of the men started toward the North Platte, where on the ice lay the body of a warrior killed during the day's fighting. Seeing the approach of the volunteers, the Cheyennes and Sioux came streaming back. Collins had recall sounded, and the troops hurried back. In the morning the body was gone.<sup>35</sup>

During the predawn hours of February 9, the troops solidified their positions. At sunrise while they were eating, they saw about four hundred mounted warriors come over the bluffs. The riders crossed the river and a few shots were exchanged, but soon the horsemen withdrew, recrossed the river, and headed rapidly north. About this time the troops observed a few Indians standing on a bluff about a quarter-mile away, apparently interested in some object. Lieutenant Brown ordered a gunner to double-shot the howitzer, and the ensuing blast sent the last of the Indians on their way. A party of twenty went up to where the Indians had last been seen. There lay the body of Private Hartshorn, the head crushed, one arm cut off at the

shoulder, one hand amputated, both legs severed at the knee, the breast cut open, and the heart gone. One eyewitness counted ninety-seven arrows in the body, another ninety-eight. Soldiers placed the bodies of Hartshorn and Harris in a wagon for later burial at Fort Laramie.<sup>36</sup>

Collins stated that continued pursuit would have been "injudicious and useless," because the large numbers of Cheyennes and Sioux could compel his small force to corral and fight whenever they pleased. "This war party of Indians has rarely been equalled in size," Collins declared, noting the assemblage included Cheyennes, Oglala and Brulé Sioux, presumably a few Kiowas and Arapahos, and perhaps some straggling Apaches and Comanches. He remembered that the ensemble was so large that he could see the smoke of their fires by day and the light in the sky by night for at least fifty miles as the Indians went north. Although he did not say so, Collins had another reason for not pursuing. His troops were in no condition to continue. The main body had marched nearly four hundred miles in ten days, much of it by night, suffering greatly from the cold, and the men had been two days and nights on a diet of hardtack and raw flesh. They had also lost significant numbers of horses and mules to their adversaries.<sup>37</sup>

Collins left the battlefield about two o'clock in the afternoon of February 10. Moving up the North Platte River about fifteen miles, he divided his command, sending Lieutenant Brown and the Eleventh Ohio back to Fort Laramie, which had been left with an insufficient garrison, then set out with the remainder, about ninety-five men, for Mud Springs. Collins proceeded towards Lodgepole Creek, where he encountered Capt. John Wilcox of the Seventh Iowa, commanding a party out to repair the telegraph line. Initially mistaking the riders for Indians, Collins had corralled his wagon train and made ready for battle. Lodgepole Creek Station had been torched, and above that point and Mud

Springs fifteen miles of the line had been destroyed.<sup>38</sup> To the east the havoc was even greater. Collins later commented:

The Indians had evidently good teachers and did their work well. They have got over their superstitious idea that it is bad medicine to touch the Telegraph.<sup>39</sup>

On February 11 Collins started his return to Fort Laramie via Camp Mitchell, reaching his post on February 14.

Collins's first chore was to make out his report of the expedition. He stated his own losses as three killed, sixteen wounded, and seven disabled from frostbite suffered during night marches. He estimated the total Indian loss in all engagements to be between 100 and 150, which varied markedly from George Bent's later recounting of no dead and only two wounded—the Cheyenne Yellow Nose and a Sioux.<sup>40</sup>

In writing of the Cheyennes and the Sioux Collins stated his belief that they had gone to the Powder River country and might be expected to continue depredations along the North Platte until severely punished. "They are well armed and mounted," he wrote, "have many rifled muskets and plenty of ammunition including minnie cartridges with ounce balls, [and] are full of venom and bent on revenge for the loss of their people south." Then, in a prophetic statement, he added, "The posts on the Platte especially Deer Creek and Platte Bridge will be in immediate danger." In concluding his report, Collins noted that he was about to leave the service after three years and wished to make his final recommendations concerning Indian policy. His solution was to send troops in the heart of the Plains Indians' buffalo country and hold forts there until the trouble was over. The best place to keep them, he declared, was in the north, towards the main Missouri, so that other areas, notably the Black Hills, the Big Horn Mountains, and the Yellowstone country, could be opened up for mining and agriculture.<sup>41</sup>

Collins's performance was questioned in later years. Writing in the



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*National Tribune* on January 30, 1890, Pvt. George Rowan of Company D, Seventh Iowa Cavalry, recalled, "Although Colonel Collins was a good man, yet as a soldier and as an officer, he was a mere cipher with shoulder straps." Rowan recounted that when the command reached the North Platte on February 8, Collins wanted to cross the river and take the fight to the Cheyennes and Sioux. If he had done so, Rowan declared, "the greatest slaughter that ever occurred in the West would have taken place (the Custer Massacre not excepted)." However, according to Rowan, all the commissioned officers of the command earnestly advised and finally persuaded the colonel to fall back to a commanding position on the banks of Rush Creek. After the fighting began, Rowan continued, it was the skill of Lieutenant Brown with the howitzer that saved the day, not the leadership of Collins. Too, the charge led by Lieutenant Patton was not something Collins had initiated, rather he had approved the request of his subordinate to do so.<sup>42</sup>

George Nelson agreed with Rowan that if Collins had acted upon his original impulse to cross the North Platte

River, all of them would have been killed. However, Francis M. Drake of Company B of the Eleventh Ohio, writing in the *National Tribune* in 1898, gave Collins his approval for what happened later and credited the colonel with good management of the forces in the two-day battle.<sup>43</sup> An anonymous enlisted man also lauded Collins in a letter to the *Rocky Mountain News*, stating that the colonel had proved himself to be "a man of pluck and courage." According to the writer, Collins "had laid off his straps and went into the fight with as much coolness as the hero of a hundred battles," passing among the men and encouraging them to take sure aim and not waste any ammunition.<sup>44</sup>

What were the long-range consequences of the engagements at Mud Spring and Rush Creek? First, neither side suffered major setbacks: the military defended the routes of communication and transportation that it believed most important to the nation's interest, and the Cheyennes and Sioux continued on their intended course to Powder River. In the case of the military the campaign had the effect of boosting morale. The exaggerated reports of Indian

casualties suggested that the troops had dealt the Cheyennes and Sioux a severe blow, giving a much-needed lift of the spirit after Julesburg. From the enlisted man who toasted Collins and his men in the February 21 issue of the *Rocky Mountain News*—"All honor to Col. Collins and his brave men, long may they live to chastise the blood thirsty and thieving red devils of the West"—to the paper's editor who used irony to make his point: "The World stands aghast! The Sun is darkened! The Moon turned to blood! Dreary storms sweep o'er the Earth. The future is dark and dreary. Col. Collins, a veteran whose locks are silvered by the snows of many winters, has wantonly slaughtered some scores or hundreds of 'inoffensive,' 'friendly,' 'pacific noble red men,'" Indian fighters and haters had their day.<sup>45</sup>

Furthermore, since neither side won a significant victory, the fighting resumed almost immediately. Even before Collins returned to Fort Laramie, the Plains Indian raiders struck again. On February 13 at Laprelle Creek, west of Fort Laramie, the men of Company G, Eleventh Ohio, skirmished with Sioux warriors, losing their commander, Capt.



Site of the Battle of Rush Creek today. The Indian village sat in the valley below. Fighting occurred on the other side of the North Platte River (center). Courtesy of the author

Levi M. Rinehart. Finally in the fighting of February 1865, the troops had gained new respect for their foe. As George Nelson put it, "They were well armed, well mounted, cunning and brave, in fact, they fought like old warriors from away back."<sup>46</sup>

As word reached the East, officials responded. The secretary of the interior informed the secretary of war that engineers of the Union Pacific Railroad had to be protected from Indian attacks and recommended that Brig. Gen. Patrick E. Connor, who had dealt the Western Shoshones a terrible blow at Bear River in January 1863, assume command in that region with sufficient troops to control the situation. On February 27 General Connor received orders to meet Division Commander Grenville M. Dodge in Denver to discuss a new command structure in response to conditions on the Plains.<sup>47</sup> The first troops ordered to the front were two regiments of recycled Confederate prisoners, the so-called "Galvanized Yankees," who received their instructions in late February. The Indian War of 1865 had begun in earnest.<sup>48</sup>

### Notes

I wish to thank Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cape and their son Scott for assistance in the fieldwork for this article. The Capes own the land surrounding the Mud Springs monument, and Charlie has studied the battle for many years. His understanding of the terrain and its changes over time were invaluable to me in attempting to recreate the engagement on site. I also want to thank Leon "Bud" Gillespie, whose property contains part of the village site occupied by the Cheyennes and Sioux during the Battle of Mud Springs. The scene looking over "Rock Creek Springs" from the high ridges is a memorable one and makes the Battle of Rush Creek comprehensible.

<sup>1</sup> Federal Writers' Project, *Nebraska: A Guide to the Cornhusker State* (New York: Hastings House, 1939), 305. Richard Burton, who visited the springs in 1860, stated that it took its name from "a little run of clear water in a black miry hollow." Richard F. Burton, *The City of the Saints and Across the Rocky Mountains to California* (Niwot, Colo.: University Press of Colorado, 1990), 70. The state monument and the surrounding battlefield have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. See "Mud Springs Pony Express Station National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomi-

nation Form," 1971, State Historic Preservation Office, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln.

<sup>2</sup> Merrill J. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road: The Covered Wagon Mainline Via Fort Kearny to Fort Laramie* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1969), 337-38; William S. Greever, *The Bonanza West: The Story of the Western Mining Rushes, 1848-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 173-74; Herman Robert Lyon, "Freighting in the 60s," *Proceedings and Collections of the Nebraska State Historical Society* 5 (1907):265; Paul Henderson, "The Story of Mud Springs," *Nebraska History* 32 (June 1951):108-19; "Mud Springs, Historic Spot in West Nebraska is Again Placed on Map," *Lincoln Star*, June 12, 1939; Raymond W. Settle and Mary Lund Settle, *Saddles and Spurs: The Pony Express Saga* (Harrisburg, Penn.: The Stackpole Company, 1955), 132; Merrill J. Mattes and Paul Henderson, *The Pony Express From St. Joseph to Fort Laramie* (St. Louis: The Patrice Press, 1989), 57-61; and Ted Stutheit, *The Pony Express on the Oregon Trail* (Lincoln: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, 1987), 14.

For accounts of the organization of the transcontinental telegraph company and the construction of its line through what was then Nebraska and Wyoming Territory, see Robert Luther Thompson, *Wiring a Continent: The History of the Telegraph Industry in the United States, 1832-1866* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), chap. 25; James D. Reid, *The Telegraph in America* (New York: Derby Brothers, 1879), 490-97; Phil Ault, *Wires West: The Story of the Talking Wires* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1974), 44-47, 77; and William E. Unrau, *Tending the Talking Wire: A Buck Soldier's View of Indian Country, 1863-1866* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1979), 10-12.

<sup>3</sup> Burton, *City of the Saints*, 70-71.

<sup>4</sup> Born in Richland County, Ohio, on April 4, 1823, Robert B. Mitchell served during the Mexican War, ending up as a captain in the Fifteenth U.S. Infantry. Moving to Kansas in 1856, he became a member of the territorial legislature and served as state treasurer from 1858 to 1861. Beginning his Civil War career as colonel of the Second Kansas, he later led the Thirteenth Division of Gen. Don Carlos Buell's army in the Battle of Perryville. At Omaha he commanded the District of Nebraska of the Department of Kansas from February 28, 1864, to March 28, 1865, and the Department of Kansas to August 22, 1865. Mustered out on January 1, 1866, he served as the governor of New Mexico until 1869. He then settled in Washington D.C., where he practiced law until his death on January 26, 1882. Robert B. Mitchell Pension File #196683, Records of the Veterans Administration, Record Group 15, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as RG 15). See also James Grant Wilson and John Fiske, eds., *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography* 4 (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1898):346.

<sup>5</sup> Mattes, *Great Platte River Road*, 474; Albert Watkins, "Historical Sketch of Cheyenne County,"

*Publications of the Nebraska State Historical Society* 17 (1913):226. The plan is in the William O. Collins Collection, Special Collections, Colorado State University Library, Fort Collins, Colorado.

<sup>6</sup> Donald J. Berthrong, *The Southern Cheyennes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), 226-28. The principal source for the Indian side of the Indian War of 1865 is George Bent, the third child of William Bent and Owl Woman, a Cheyenne. See George E. Hyde, *Life of George Bent, Written From His Letters*, Savoie Lottinville, ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968); H. L. Lubers, "William Bent Family and the Indians of the Plains," *Colorado Magazine* 12 (Jan. 1936):19-22; Dan L. Thrapp, *Encyclopedia of Frontier Biography* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 97-99.

<sup>7</sup> "The Overland Mail Line," *New York Times*, Jan. 27, 1865; Byron G. Hooper, Jr., "A Capsule History of the Julesburg Area," *The Denver Westerners Monthly Roundup* 19 (Nov. 1961):6; C. F. Parker, "Old Julesburg and Fort Sedgwick," *Colorado Magazine* 7 (July 1930):139-41.

<sup>8</sup> When the main body of Indians broke camp on January 26, Black Kettle and his eighty lodges of Southern Cheyennes bid them adieu. Tired of fighting, the chief and his band sought refuge south of the Arkansas with the Kiowas, Comanches, and Little Raven's Southern Arapahos. There in the spring of 1865 they signed a peace treaty. Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 177; George Bird Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), 188.

<sup>9</sup> Eugene F. Ware, *The Indian War of 1864*, intro. by John D. McDermott (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 325-29; Nicholas O'Brien, "Reminiscences," *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver) Dec. 26, 1915; Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes*, 183; Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 169-72; *Rocky Mountain News*, January 11, 1865; *Testimony as to the Claim of Ben Holladay for Losses and Damages*, S. Misc. Doc. 19, 46th Cong., 2d sess., 1879-80, Serial 1890, 29.

<sup>10</sup> "One of the Boys of Co. K, 11th Ohio, The Battle of Mud Springs," *Rocky Mountain News*, Feb. 21, 1865. Dated February 15, Fort Halleck, this article represents the composite story of three men of the Eleventh Ohio who fought at Mud Springs and had just arrived at the Wyoming post from Fort Laramie; *Nebraska Republican* (Omaha), Feb. 10, 1865; Frank A. Root and William Elsey Connelley, *Overland Stage to California* (Topeka: Privately printed, 1901), 360-61; Grinnell, *Fighting Cheyennes*, 193-94; Berthrong, *Southern Cheyennes*, 229; Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 187.

<sup>11</sup> Letter from Winfield S. Davis, Company H, Eleventh Ohio, at Mud Springs, to his sister, Mar. 7, 1865, Winfield S. Davis Pension File, RG 15. From New Alexandria, Ohio, Davis entered the service on June 22, 1863, at the age of eighteen. He died of disease at Mud Springs on May 31, 1865. See *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio*

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in *the War of the Rebellion* (Akron: Werner Ptg. & Litho. Co., 1891), 571.

<sup>12</sup> William O. Collins's report of the February campaign, Fort Laramie, Feb. 15, 1865, to John Pratt, acting asst. adj. gen., District of Nebraska. A handwritten copy (hereafter cited as Collins Report) is in the William O. Collins Papers, Denver Public Library. The report is available in printed form in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 1, vol. 48, pt. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), 92-98. The Collins Papers also contain an early draft of Collins's annual regimental report, which covers his February activities in summary form. According to "One of the Boys of Co. K," there were five hundred cattle in the herd.

<sup>13</sup> William Oliver Collins was born in Sommers, Connecticut, on August 23, 1809. After graduating from Amherst College in 1833, he moved to his life-long home of Hillsborough, Ohio, where he practiced law. In 1843 he married Catherine Wever, who bore him three children. When the Civil War began, Collins raised the regiment that was to become the Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry and became its colonel. Collins led his regiment to Wyoming in 1862, where the troops performed exemplary service in guarding the overland trails and the Pacific Telegraph. Mustered out of service in April 1865, he died on October 26, 1880. "Death of Colonel Wm. O. Collins," unidentified newspaper clipping, ca. Oct. 27, 1880, William O. Collins Papers, FF13, Denver Public Library; Agnes Wright Spring, *Caspar Collins: The Life and Exploits of an Indian Fighter of the Sixties* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), 35-36, 68-69.

<sup>14</sup> Collins Report, 92-93, 97. For accounts of the Mud Springs campaign based solely on the Collins Report, see David P. Robrock, "The Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry on the Central Plains, 1862-1866," *Arizona and the West* 25 (Spring 1983):39-41; and Spring, *Caspar Collins*, 61-69.

<sup>15</sup> Enrolled on August 3, 1863, at the age of twenty-seven, Ellsworth became a first lieutenant on September 16. On May 1, 1865, he was promoted to captain of Company E. Military Service Record, Records of the Office of the Adjutant General, Record Group 94, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as RG 94); *Official Roster of Soldiers of Ohio*, 570.

<sup>16</sup> David C. Peck, "In Indian Country," *National Tribune*, Mar. 10, 1898. William H. Idlet entered the service in February 1861 at the age of thirty-two, and reenlisted on February 3, 1864. He died on March 19, 1865. *Official Roster of Soldiers of Ohio*, 571.

<sup>17</sup> Grinnell, *Fighting Cheyennes*, 195.

<sup>18</sup> Winfield S. Davis to sister, Mar. 7, 1865, RG 15.

<sup>19</sup> Peck, "In Indian Country."

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* Sgt. William Hall had enlisted on June 22, 1863. He was about twenty-six years old at the

time of the Mud Springs fight. Standing five feet eleven and one-half inches, he had a fair complexion, light hair, and blue eyes. He died on January 7, 1866, at Cold Springs Station, Dakota Territory. The certificate of death stated that he died of "disease unknown, fell from his horse dead while in the discharge of his duty." Military Service Record, RG 94; *Official Roster of Soldiers of Ohio*, 570.

<sup>21</sup> Collins Report, 93.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 94; "One of the Boys of Co. K." See also "Indian Fight," *The Miners' Register* (Central City, Colo.), Feb. 24, 1865. David Peck estimated 1,500 to 2,000 Indians, as did G. W. Nelson. Colonel Livingston reported nearly 2,000, while W. S. Davis fantasized 5,000. Peck, "In Indian Country"; G. W. Nelson, "Out on the Plains," *National Tribune*, May 1, 1890; *New York Times*, Feb. 21, 1865; and Winfield S. Davis to sister, Mar. 7, 1865, RG 15.

<sup>23</sup> Collins Report, 93.

<sup>24</sup> Grinnell, *Fighting Cheyennes*, 196; Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 190.

<sup>25</sup> One of the Mud Spring casualties was twenty-two-year-old John Biehn. The private never recovered and died of his wounds at Fort Laramie on February 24, 1865. Another was Imry Loucerback, about twenty-eight years old, whose wounds caused his discharge from the army on April 4, 1865. *Official Roster of Soldiers of Ohio*, 553-54.

William Brown was born in Miami, Ohio, and enlisted on October 10, 1861, at the age of twenty-seven. He was five feet ten and one-half inches tall, with a dark complexion, gray eyes, and brown hair. He became a second lieutenant of Company B on November 21 and first lieutenant in Company A on March 3, 1863. Brown was mustered out on April 1, 1865. Military Service Record, RG 94.

<sup>26</sup> Nelson, "Out on the Plains." From Easton, Ohio, George W. Nelson enlisted on March 7, 1864, in Company I, Eleventh Ohio. Mustered out July 14, 1866, more on his experiences at Mud Springs and Rush Creek appeared in the *National Tribune* on August 15, 1901. Nelson wrote that he based his writings on a diary, in the form of a small passbook, which he kept from March 7, 1864, to March 7, 1865.

<sup>27</sup> Collins Report, 94. The stream that now bears the name of Rush Creek discharges into the North Platte about forty miles farther east. *History of Cheyenne County, Nebraska, 1886* (Dalton, Tex.: Curtis Media Corporation, 1987), 23.

<sup>28</sup> George W. Rowan, "Fighting the Sioux," *National Tribune*, Jan. 30, 1890.

<sup>29</sup> Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 191-92.

<sup>30</sup> Collins Report, 94; Rowan, "Fighting the Sioux."

<sup>31</sup> Born in Logan, Ohio, in 1835, Robert F. Patton enlisted on October 20, 1861, as a private in Company A, Sixth Ohio Volunteer Cavalry. Appointed to the officer ranks in October 1864, he stood five feet seven inches, had a light complexion, black

hair, and blue eyes. He had been a gunsmith prior to enlistment. Military Service Record, RG 94.

<sup>32</sup> Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 192. Yellow Nose was a Ute Indian who had been captured with his mother on the Rio Grande in about 1854. Brought up by Spotted Wolf, he became a renowned warrior, living to fight in the Battle of the Little Bighorn, eleven years later. Grinnell, *Fighting Cheyennes*, 201, n.12; Thomas B. Marquis, "Red Pipe's Squaw," *Century Magazine* 118 (June 1929):203-4.

<sup>33</sup> Nelson, "Out on the Plains." William H. Hartshorn, born in Ross County, Ohio, in 1832, entered the service on October 19, 1861. He reenlisted in Company H, Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, on December 1, 1863. Standing five feet ten inches with blue eyes, dark hair, and a fair complexion, he had been a farmer before enlisting. Serving first at Fort Halleck, he moved to Fort Laramie in the first days of February 1865. Military Service Record, RG 94; *Official Roster of Soldiers of Ohio*, 571.

Born 1842 in Randolph County, Indiana, John A. Harris enlisted in Company D, Seventh Iowa Cavalry, in April 1864. Unmarried and a farmer by occupation, he stood five feet eleven inches and had blue eyes, brown hair, and a ruddy complexion. Military Service Record, RG 94; Pension File WC-817-102, RG 15.

<sup>34</sup> Peck, "In Indian Country"; "One of the Boys of Co. K." Indian sources confuse Hartshorn's run-away as an attempt to carry a message to Fort Mitchell or Fort Laramie. Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 193; Grinnell, *Fighting Cheyennes*, 201.

<sup>35</sup> Collins Report, 95-96.

<sup>36</sup> Peck, "In Indian Country."

<sup>37</sup> Collins Report, 97-98.

<sup>38</sup> *Nebraska Republican*, Mar. 10, 1865; letter from Col. Robert R. Livingston, Fort Rankin, Feb. 11, 1865, to Maj. Gen. Grenville M. Dodge, *War of the Rebellion*, 815-16.

<sup>39</sup> Collins Report, 96. Collins was undoubtedly aware of the initial strategy employed by telegraphers to keep marauders away from the line. Crediting deceased Mud Springs telegraph operator Thomas J. Montgomery with the information, the *Dalton* (Nebraska) *Delegate* described the method as follows: "The Indians had been taught the dangers of interfering with the wires by a few demonstrations made to them by operators. Shocks from the wires had taught them it was bad medicine to try to interfere with them." "Pioneer Mud Springs Telegraph Operator Dies," *Dalton Delegate*, Nov. 9, 1932.

<sup>40</sup> Hyde, *Life of George Bent*, 193. Some of the men in Collins's regiment estimated as many as two hundred Indians killed in the February fighting. "One of the Boys of Co. K."

<sup>41</sup> Collins Report, 98. On July 26, 1865, Collins's only son, Lt. Caspar Collins of Company G, Eleventh Ohio, would lose his life in the Battle at Platte Bridge Station, fought against Northern Cheyenne

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and Sioux warriors led by George Bent and Roman Nose within the present limits of Casper, Wyoming.

<sup>42</sup> Rowan, "Fighting the Sioux." Born on May 22, 1845, near Benton, Tennessee, George W. Rowan enlisted as a trumpeter in Company D, Seventh Iowa Volunteer Cavalry, on December 23, 1862. He was five feet four inches tall and had blue eyes, light hair, and a light complexion. When enlisting he gave his occupation as a farmer. After completing his service on December 23, 1865, he became a lawyer. He married Catherine P. Berger on December 30, 1875, and fathered a son, George, in 1886. Rowan died in Chohalis, Washington, on May 28, 1919. Military Service Record, RG 94; Pension 1047284, RG 15.

Collins did not believe that the howitzer had been that important. In his report (p.97) he noted:

The howitzer under command of Lt. Brown was admirably served but did not prove as useful as was expected, owing to the defective character of the ammunition, many of the shells failing to burst at all, and some bursting at the muzzle of the gun. I . . . ask that proper steps be taken, to condemn such of our ammunition as is worthless or doubtful and that better be furnished to the troops stationed here. All supplies for

this service should be of the best quality, as they are forwarded but once in the year, and mistakes cannot be reasonably remedied.

<sup>43</sup> Nelson, "Out on the Plains"; Francis M. Drake, Company B, Eleventh Ohio, "Fighting the Sioux," *National Tribune*, Nov. 28, 1898.

<sup>44</sup> "One of the Boys of Co. K."

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.; "Another Massacre," *Rocky Mountain News*, Feb. 22, 1865.

<sup>46</sup> Nelson, "Out on the Plains."

<sup>47</sup> Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton had already received a letter from Ben Holladay, dated October 15, urging Connor's reassignment. Henry E. Palmer, "Powder River Indian Expedition of 1865, With a Few Incidents Preceding the Same," in *Civil War Sketches and Incidents, Papers Read by Companions of the Commander of the State of Nebraska, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* 1 (Omaha: The Commandery, 1902), 95.

Born in Ireland, March 17, 1820, Patrick Edward Connor emigrated with his parents to New York City at an early age. Participating in the Seminole and Mexican Wars, he moved to California in 1850, becoming interested in mining ventures. At the outbreak of the Civil War, he was commis-

sioned colonel of the Third California Infantry Volunteers. Promoted to brigadier general on March 29, 1863, he had been appointed commander of the District of Utah in October 1863. Mustered out effective April 20, 1866, he died in Salt Lake City, Utah, December 17, 1891. O.J. Hollister, "Gen. P. Edward Connor," *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, Dec. 21, 1891; C.G. Coutant, *The History of Wyoming from the Earliest Known Discoveries* 1 (Laramie: Chaplin, Spafford & Mathison, Printers, 1899), 533-34; and Palmer, *Civil War Sketches*, 95.

<sup>48</sup> Robert Bruce, ed., "The Powder River Expedition of 1865," *The United States Army Recruiting News* 10 (Aug. 1928):7. Two years after the action at Mud Springs, A.B. Ostrander visited the site, where he stopped to get a cup of coffee. He found the telegraph office in a dugout in a side hill, noting that "these operators had to 'dig in' for protection in some places along the line in those dangerous days." A telegraph station continued to operate at the site until 1877, when the line was abandoned. Ostrander, *An Army Boy of the Sixties* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, N.Y.: World Book Company, 1924), 232; "Mud Springs, Historic Spot in West Nebraska is Again Placed on Map," *Lincoln Star*, June 12, 1939.



**Mud Springs area, 1972. A former country schoolhouse stands to the right.**  
NSHS Museum Collections