

for sounds of the expected conflict, lo! over the brow of the ridge, appeared the old trapper and his train, and entered the corral with the others. The Indians were baffled, and filled the air with yells of rage and disappointment.

Slowly the day wore along. In the afternoon a band of horsemen was seen riding down the lake shore from the north, at break-neck speed, toward the camp. Here was a new enemy, they thought, another band of savages, and they looked carefully to the priming of their rifles. Surely those red and blue shirts and broad slouch hats could not be the habiliments of savages. The approaching horsemen had rifles in their hands, and each had tied a handkerchief to his gun and waved it aloft as a token of peace and friendship. It was Ben Wright and his brave company of volunteers, who had ridden day and night since leaving Yreka, and were now coming boldly to the rescue.

They knew nothing of the death of Coats, Long and Ousby, but they grasped the situation at a glance; and now, stopping not to speak or draw breath, on they rushed past the corral of emigrants, down toward Bloody Point, between the Indians among the rocks and their canoes in the water. Leaping from their saddles and leaving their animals to run where they would, they made a fierce onslaught upon the surprised and terrified savages.

The Indians had seen their approach, and from their dress and conduct knew them to be Californians who had come to fight. They might fool around a train of emigrants with considerable impunity, but a company of mounted Californians was a different proposition, as some of these same men had taught them the year before; and when they saw them ride for the point to cut off retreat, instead of going to the corral as they had expected, the savages stampeded for their canoes in terror.

Then commenced a slaughter—a carnage. The Modocs thought only of flight, and madly rushed for their canoes, while rifle, revolver and knife made havoc among them. For a mile up and down the lake shore did the battle rage, each man fighting independently, and being sometimes among a dozen fleeing braves, dealing death blows right and left. Even when the Indians had reached their canoes the deadly bullets followed them till they were out of range or had hidden themselves in the tules.

Not one of that brave band of avengers was injured, while the death cry had been given by at least forty* Modoc braves, and as many more had carried to their island home in the tules aching reminders of the fight, to live or die as Nature might decree.

For several days search was made among the tules for victims of the Modocs. They found the mangled bodies of many emigrants whose death had not before been known. Two of these were women and one a little child. They were mutilated and disfigured in a most horrible manner, causing even these strong men to turn away from the ghastly spectacle with a shudder. In reading of the massacre that occurred on Lost River a few months

later the horrible sights those men had witnessed here must not be forgotten.

They found also portions of wagons, and the Indians were discovered to be in possession of firearms, clothing, camp utensils, money and a great variety of domestic articles, showing that a whole train of emigrants, how many none could tell, had fallen a complete prey to the savages. Verily, it was a Bloody Point indeed! Twenty-two bodies were found and buried by Wright's company, and fourteen by a company that had come out from Jacksonville, Or., commanded by Colonel John E. Ross. Of these last several were women and children, their bodies gashed and mutilated in a most revolting manner.

Ross returned to Jacksonville, while Wright escorted the trains that had collected here as far as Lost River, when he returned and established a camp on Clear Lake. At that point scattered bands of emigrants were collected into large trains and sent through the hostile country under escort.

About the end of October the last train passed along, accompanied by Captain McDermit, whose men had all returned in details. Their labor of duty was over, and they could have returned to Yreka with honor and glory, but they wanted to remain and chastise the Modocs so severely that they would forever remember it was dangerous to murder even helpless emigrants. In this they were supported by the people of Yreka, who supplied them bountifully with provisions. This motive was strong enough to keep them all there, and was the only one that actuated many of them; but it must be admitted that Wright and a few others had an additional object in opening an aggressive campaign. The savages were known to have stock, property and money, taken from the murdered emigrants, and this they hoped to secure.

The company had now dwindled to nineteen, who established a camp on the lake shore at a point known as the "Peninsula," and endeavored to open communication with the savages, whose rancheria was on an island some distance out in the lake. Here they were visited by Major Fitzgerald with a company of dragoons, accompanied by Captain McDermit. This party brought a boat with them, which they turned over to Wright a few days later, and departed for Yreka.

They had spent some time in camp here in their futile efforts to reach the Indians, and their stock of provisions and ammunition was running low. Four men were sent to Yreka for supplies, with instructions to return at once.

There was a thick growth of tules between the camp and the island, and the men were baffled in all their efforts to reach it. Being unable to either go to the savages or induce them to come out and fight, Ben Wright determined to open negotiations with them, and get them in his power under cover of a truce. To this end he dispatched several men in the boat with Old Mary, a squaw belonging to one of the men, with a message of peace. They returned unsuccessful. The next day they went again, and this time were accompanied on their return by two young Indians in a canoe. These

* In after years the Modocs would only admit a loss of twenty in this battle at Bloody Point.