

Yale University Library Digital Collections

Title	Black Hills Expedition order and dispatch book, 1874
Creator	Custer, George Armstrong, 1839-1876
Date	1874
Rights	The use of this image may be subject to the copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) or to site license or other rights management terms and conditions. The person using the image is liable for any infringement.
Generated	2021-02-18 16:41:14 UTC
Terms of Use	https://guides.library.yale.edu/about/policies/access
View in DL	https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/2003541

cave extends about four hundred feet under ground, beyond which point it was not practicable to explore it, its walls and roof are covered with rude carvings and drawings cut into the solid rock, apparently the work of Indians although probably by a different tribe than either of those now roaming in this region. Near the cave was found a white man's skull apparently perforated by a bullet. It had been exposed to the atmosphere for several years. As no white men, except those belonging to this expedition are known to have passed any where near the locality the discovery of this skull was regarded with unusual interest. The cave was found to contain numerous articles of Indian equipment which had been thrown into the cave by the Indians as offerings to the Great Spirit, I have named the cave "Ludlow's Cave" in honor of the Engineer Officer of the Expedition. Our march thus far has been made without molestation upon the part of the Indians. We discovered no signs indicating the recent presence of Indians until day before yesterday when Captain Mc Purgall of the Cavalry who was on the flank discovered a small party of about twenty Indians watching our movements, the Indians scampered off as soon as discovered. Yesterday the same or a similar sized party made its appearance along our line of march and soon after several signals of smoke were sent up which our Indian guides interpret as carrying information to the main body of our presence and movements. As I

sent pacific messages to all the tribes in
 festing this region before the expedition
 moved and expressed a desire to main-
 tain friendly relations with them, the
 signals observed by us may have simply
 been made to enable the villages to
 avoid us. Our Indian guides think dif-
 ferently however and believe the Indians
 mean war, should this be true they
 will be the party to fire the first shot.
 Indians have been seen near camp
 to-day. Mr. Grinnell of Yale College one
 of the Geologists accompanying the
 expedition discovered on yesterday an
 important fossil, it was a bone about
 four feet long and twelve inches in
 diameter and had evidently belonged to
 an animal larger than an elephant.
 Beds of lignite of good quality have
 been observed at various points along
 our route by Professor Winchell one of
 the Geologists of the expedition. I do
 not know whether I will be able to
 communicate with you again before the
 return of the expedition or not.

G. H. R. S.
 Brevet Maj. General 1854.
 Command. Expedition