

DEATH COMES TO ROMAN RUTTEN A BIG HORN SURVIVOR

Was one of those under command of Reno who escaped savage onslaught, June 1876.

Retired from service 1890.

For many years was employed as a government tailor at army service schools, Fort Leavenworth.

Funeral Saturday.

Roman Rutten, 79, a survivor under Major Reno at the battle of Little Big Horn River, died at his home, 420 North Broadway, 7:15 o'clock last night. Mr. Rutten was taken ill with pneumonia a week ago and little hope had been held for his recovery. The veteran calvary man met death in the same spirit he had braved it many times in the face of the fierce warriors of the Sioux. He is among the last of that historic engagement when the command of General Custer was wiped out. Mr. Rutten knew of only a few of the now living survivors of the engagement on June 27, 1876, fought by Major Reno two days after the Custer massacre. Among these are H. B. Wise, Boston, a retired engineer, and Henry Ryan, New York City, a retired policeman. For many years Rutten kept up a correspondence with these. Within the last two weeks he had received letters from each. Roman Rutten was born August 13, 1846 in Waldern, Baden, Germany. When a young man he came to America and in 1866 enlisted in the regular army. In Germany he had learned the trade of tailor and his service in the army of the fatherland made him an excellent soldier in the army of the country to which he emigrated. Mr. Rutten was assigned to the Seventh Calvary and served with this regiment until his discharge in 1890 when he was retired for disability in the line of duty. He not only took part in the Little Big Horn engagement but was with the Seventh Calvary under Sturgis in the campaign against Chief Joseph three years later. At the battle of the Little Big Horn General Custer met the Sioux under Sitting Bull on June 25, 1876. His command was wiped out with the last of 265 men. Major Reno came up on the 28th and for two days engaged the Indians in skirmishes, losing a number of his command. Rutten twice was shot through the crown of his hat. When Custer was found he was wearing a shirt made by Mr. Rutten. Mr. Rutten was a member of Troop M commanded by Captain Thomas French. For gallantry in action Mr. Rutten was awarded a medal. Mr. Rutten came to Fort Leavenworth thirty seven years ago. He was engaged for many years as a government tailor and was on duty at the staff school. Because of disability he was retired in 1890 with a record of thirty four years service.

At the time of his discharge he was a member to Troop B, Seventh Calvary. Mr. Rutten for many years has made his home at 420 North Broadway. The old calvary man sat on his front porch and smoked his pipe in contentment. Passers by received a friendly salute as they came to the Rutten home. He was an excellent citizen and held in highest regard by all who knew him. The friendly wave of his hand never failed until strength deserted him. Mr. Rutten is survived by his widow, Catherine, his sons, Amor, Chicago, Rudolph, Leavenworth, Killian, Leavenworth, his daughters, Mrs. Emma Ox, Leavenworth, Mrs. Anna Oppenheimer[spelling uncertain], Fairbury, Nebraska. There also survives eleven grandchildren and three great grandchildren. A service of solemn high mass will be held at St. Joseph's Church at 9:00 o'clock Saturday morning. Reverend Father Boniface assisted by two priests will officiate. Full military honors will be accorded in the burial at the national cemetery at Fort Leavenworth. The procession will be met at the end of Government Lane by representatives of the army including the band. At the grave a salute will be fired and Taps sounded.

[From Leavenworth, Kansas Newspaper] [Roman Ruttan: 1846-1925]