Another Day in the Life of an Engineer

During all these years of work on the location and construction of the Kansas Pacific Railway, the surveying parties were continually harassed by hostile Indians, and were frequently obliged to fight for their lives. His army life and acquaintance with warfare was admirable preparation for this experience, and on one memorable occasion, June 19, 1869, Mr. Schuyler, while leading an advance of a preliminary survey near Sheridan, Kan., and while engaged in picking out a line for the party a few miles in the rear, was surprised and surrounded by a band of 100 or more hostile Cheyennes, but by coolness and presence of mind, he cut his way through the lines and escaped without a scratch, killing four Indians in the engagement. Five bullets were lodged in his horse; his field glasses and one spur were cut off by bullets, and his clothes were riddled; even the handle of his carbine were pierced and nearly torn from his grasp by a rifle ball. His plucky defense of himself saved the lives of the rest of the party, and they all succeeded in retreating to the military post fifteen miles distant, fighting their way through the swarming hordes of savages, whose well laid plans for picking off the party one at a time was baffled by the coolness of their intrepid leader. The only member of the party wounded in this thrilling adventure was the writer.

Excerpt from the memoir of Howard Schuyler (1844 - 1883) written by James D. Schuyler for the ASCE Transactions, Vol. XXXVI, December 1896 - (Partial transcription of memoir without changes).

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BUILDING BIG, a five-part PBS television series and website from WGBH Boston.
Railroad History Archive at the University of Connecticut
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
The Engineering Collection at the Linda Hall Library
CSCE welcomes inquiries and more information about Connecticut civil engineering history. If you are interested in learning more about any of the files above or have historical information to share, please send an email to history@csce.org.

CSCE Awarded the History and Heritage Section Citation for 2010!

ASCE's History and Heritage Committee (HHC) selected the Connecticut Society of Civil Engineers Section as the winner of the History and Heritage Section citation for 2010. CSCE was selected for its efforts to scan historic civil engineering information from its proceedings and make the information accessible to students and the general public through its website, and its willingness to work with other historical organizations such as the Connecticut Historical Society to develop historic exhibitions for the public. CSCE would like to thank CSCE History & Heritage Committee Chair (and former CSCE President) Randy States for all his hard work on these efforts on behalf of CSCE!