

What other claims he made are not known, but his words produced such an impression, it is said, that for a time every full-blood and half-blood among the Crows believed in him.

In a few months he had become one of the most influential leaders in the tribe, when, taking advantage of some dissatisfaction toward the agent, he headed a demonstration against the agency on September 30. Troops under General Ruger were called on to arrest him and the others concerned, and in attempting to do this, on November 5, 1887, a skirmish ensued in which Sword-bearer was killed. His death convinced his followers of the falsehood of his pretensions, and the tribe, which hitherto had always been loyal to the government, soon resumed its friendly attitude. (*Sec. War, 2; A. G. O., 3; additional details from a personal letter by Colonel Simon Snyder, Fifteenth infantry.*)

*Cheyenne investigation?*

The action is graphically described by Roosevelt on the authority of one of the officers engaged. When the troops arrived, they found the Crow warriors awaiting them on a hill, mounted on their war ponies and in full paint and buckskin. In this author's words—

The Crows on the hilltop showed a sullen and threatening front, and the troops advanced slowly toward them, and then halted for a parley. Meanwhile a mass of black thunder clouds gathering on the horizon threatened one of those cloudbursts of extreme severity and suddenness so characteristic of the plains country. While still trying to make arrangements for a parley, a horseman started out of the Crow ranks and galloped headlong down toward the troops. It was the medicine chief Sword-bearer. He was painted and in his battle dress, wearing his war bonnet of floating, trailing eagle feathers, and with the plumes of the same bird braided in the mane and tail of his fiery little horse. On he came at a gallop almost up to the troops, and then began to circle around them, calling and singing, and throwing his red sword into the air, catching it by the hilt as it fell. Twice he rode completely around the troops, who stood in uncertainty, not knowing what to make of his performance, and expressly forbidden to shoot at him. Then, paying no further heed to them, he rode back toward the Crows. It appears that he had told the latter that he would ride twice around the hostile force, and by his incantations would call down rain from heaven, which would make the hearts of the white men like water, so that they would go back to their homes. Sure enough, while the arrangements for the parley were still going forward, down came the cloudburst, drenching the command, and making the ground on the hills in front nearly impassable; and before it dried a courier arrived with orders to the troops to go back to camp.

This fulfillment of Sword-bearer's prophecy of course raised his reputation to the zenith, and the young men of the tribe prepared for war, while the older chiefs, who more fully realized the power of the whites, still hung back. When the troops next appeared, they came upon the entire Crow force, the women and children with their tepees being off to one side beyond a little stream, while almost all the warriors of the tribe were gathered in front. Sword-bearer started to repeat his former ride, to the intense irritation of the soldiers. Luckily, however, this time some of his young men could not be restrained. They, too, began to ride near the troops, and one of them was unable to refrain from firing on Captain Edwards's troop, which was in the van. This gave the soldiers their chance. They instantly responded with a volley, and Edwards's troop charged. The fight lasted only a minute or two, for Sword-bearer was struck by a bullet and fell; and as he had boasted himself invulnerable and promised that his warriors should be invulnerable also if they would follow him, the hearts of the latter became as water, and they broke in every direction. (*Roosevelt, 1.*)