

One day, about September 28, 1877, Sitting Bull saw mirror signals sent by his scouts from a hill to the south of his camp, and he knew that someone was coming. Soon after, a crowd of people horseback and afoot came pouring over the hill and down into the narrow valley where the Sioux were camped. To his surprise, he saw that they were his old enemies, Nez Percés, hurrying along, and with them rode some Sioux hunters who were bringing them in. As they swarmed down the slope, he saw that many of them were wounded and bloody, some in travois, some tied in their saddles; the tired, haggard women were crying, the men looked grim, and babies whined from their cradles slung from saddle-horns. They did not stop, but rode right into the middle of his camp, looking for protection. Then they halted.

Robert Moses, a Nez Percé who spoke English, said, "There are more of us coming. Bear Coat's soldiers have cornered our chief, Joseph, at the Bear Paw Mountains. We want to be friends with the Sioux."

Sitting Bull's heart was touched. He took pity on the refugees. He knew just how they felt. In Canada there could be no war, the Red Coats had warned him. "You are welcome," he said, and everybody shook hands. The strangers gave Sitting Bull eight head of horses. They had a lot of horses, but nothing else, except some meat tied on their saddles, and the clothes they wore.

All the Sioux were angry and pitiful to think how these poor people had been treated; the soldiers had chased them since midsummer, all the way from their old home beyond the mountains, had fought with them in five battles and several skirmishes. Many of their women and children had been killed, and most of the warriors were wounded. They had been trying to get to Sitting Bull's camp in Canada, they said. But so many of their people were wounded that Chief Joseph would not leave them behind; he said he had never heard of a wounded Indian who got well in the care of the soldiers. But White Bird had brought away his wounded, he