

-16-

would return with me to Poplar Creek. Accordingly, as soon as breakfast was over, we hitched up the mules, and were only too glad to get away from a place, where, to say the least, our experience had been very unpleasant. Strong Hand was returning afoot, and at his suggestion, I loaned him my horse, to enable him to traverse the river bottoms in quest of deer. The women and children climbed into the wagon with their meagre effects, and we began moving out of the camp, Strong Hand riding just in advance of the mules, while I occupied a seat with the driver. We had reached the outskirts of the camp, and were nearing the crossing of Frenchman's Creek, which was bordered on either side by a dense growth of willows, when I saw a number of warriors rapidly approaching us from the camp, each one carrying, in addition to his rifle, a stout⁴⁵/club. From this I knew that they were what they call soldiers, corresponding to our police. They called to Strong Hand to halt, but instead of obeying, he put whip to his horse and quickly disappeared through the willows at the crossing, but not before one of the Indians, a son of the noted Chief, Black Moon, had raised his rifle and sent a bullet flying after him. My soldier friend, being unacquainted with Indian customs, supposed that we were sure enough attacked, and for an instant, lost his presence of mind, and was about to lash the mules into a run, in the mad hope of escaping from the savages in a ponderous government wagon, drawn by four equally ponderous draught mules. I snatched the lines from his hand, and reined in the mules, in the meantime begging Day not to get excited, and to put down that whip. He recovered himself instantly, when I handed him the lines and told him to hold the mules, and jumping to the ground, I ran⁴⁶ / directly to the brave who had fired the shot. I assumed a fearless demeanor which I did not feel,