

46
231 * It will be seen from what both Finerty and Bourke say of the Rosebud that Grouard had noted things very accurately, and divined the purpose of the Sioux to a nicety as he passed down the "cul de sac" in advance of Mills' courageous battalion. He knew, because his six years' experience with these same Indians had been a practical lesson to him, that death awaited the entire command at the lower end of the canyon. One of the great wonders now is why Crazy Horse, when it was discovered that Mills' battalion turned to leave the death trap, did not fall upon and annihilate it. The explanation seems to be found in the words of Crazy Horse himself. He wanted the entire command, and even then had hopes of getting it. Failing he repeated the tactics then attempted at the Custer battle, and, with the same force he had thrown against Crook, caught the five troops of the Seventh Cavalry (rank and file) to the very last soul.—AUTHOR.)

I had seen all I wanted to see to convince me of what was going on, and when I got back the General was just ready to start down the canyon. In fact, the whole command had started when I met it. I asked Gen. Crook where they were going. He said:

"Down to the village."

"You can't go through the canyon," I told him.

He asked why.

I said, "You can't go through. They will kill your whole command if you attempt to go through there."

232 He could not believe that; laughed quietly about it. I did everything I could to dissuade him, and the only way I could prevail on him to abandon the undertaking was by telling him there was no ammunition in the command. The scouts didn't have any, and a great many of the companies didn't have any, and when the General gave orders to find out how much ammunition there was, it didn't average ten cartridges to the man; and that was the only thing that stopped him. In fact, it was the only thing that saved his command, because he would have made the attempt to go through the canyon under any other circumstances.

When Crook made up his mind to do anything, it was generally done. The only way I could convince him not to go was by satisfying him of there being no ammunition in the command. I had seen all day how the Indians and troops were firing, and especially the scouts, so I asked the General to find out the amount of ammunition each company had. He found he would have to wait until he got more ammunition from the wagons before taking the offensive. We went into camp at the lower end of the battlefield. As far as the fight was concerned, I don't think that either side could claim a complete victory, although the troops held the ground. The Indians had tried to lead the troops down through the canyon where they had fortified on each side; and if the troops had ever gone down through there, there would not have been one of them left to tell the tale, for the Indians were fixed in such a way that they could have cross-fired them without getting hurt themselves, or could even have rolled rocks down in amongst
233 them and crushed them. *

Seeing this while I was going down through the canyon is the reason I tried so hard to stop the command from going through. To sum up the whole battle, there were twenty-eight soldiers killed and fifty-six wounded. One of the Indian scouts was killed and three of them wounded. On the Indian side there were thirteen of them killed, that I know of, and I could not tell the number that were wounded, but there were a good many