

a great smoke, and realized that there had been a fight. Returning to camp in the night, we reported to General Crook. About June 30th, I with my squadron, being the outpost on the lower Goose Creek, observed at sunrise some smoke which created suspicion, and looking down the valley I saw three mounted men coming toward me, which I first thought were Indians, but later discovered that they were white men on mules, Privates James Bell, William Evans, and Benj. F. Stewart, Company "E" 7th Infantry (who were awarded medals on December 2, 1876) and I rode to them. They handed me a dispatch from General Terry to General Crook, stating that Custer and his command had been massacred and that they had been sent by General Terry to carry his message to General Crook. Crook was in the mountains hunting. I carried the dispatch to Colonel Royal, commanding the camp, who opened it, and read the dispatch, which horrified the assembled officers.

He ordered me with my full company to carry it as rapidly as I could to General Crook, and after climbing about eighteen miles in the mountains I found him returning with his pack mules loaded down with elk, deer and big horn sheep. He read the dispatch, and while all of us were horrified and oppressed with mortification and sympathy for the dead and wounded, there was with all, particularly in General Crook's expression, a feeling that the country would realize that there were others who had underrated the valor and numbers of the Sioux.

While General Crook was a cold, gray-eyed and somewhat cold-blooded warrior, treating his men perhaps too practically in war time, there yet ran through us a feeling of profound sympathy for his great misfortune, while at the same time we had a still more profound sympathy for the other gallant and more sympathetic Custer--at least, most of us. There were some there, I regret to say, who had ranked him and over whom he was promoted, that would insinuate, "I told you so."