

Dull Knife's Cheyennes - 180 lodges — were encamped on the Red Fork of Powder River, where the valley formed a great bowl surrounded by mountains too steep to climb. They had warning that soldiers were coming. For, having rounded up Red Cloud's band and Swift Bear's village and taken them to Fort Robinson, Nebraska, General George Crook felt free to push over the snow and attack the hostile camp. ~~General~~ ^A Ranald S. MacKenzie was ordered forward with a command of some 1100 men, nearly one-third being scouts — Sioux, Arapaho, Shoshone, Bannock, friendly Cheyennes, and — most numerous — Major Frank North's Pawnees.

Dull Knife's scouts, sent to watch his back trail, were four in number, including the notorious High Wolf and my old friend, young Two Moon. They found the soldier camp on the Crazy Woman Fork, where MacKenzie had his wagons corralled. Two Moon walked boldly into that camp, where he was taken for a friendly scout, and so got away with a bunch of the soldiers' horses. He still laughs about his easy victory.

But already MacKenzie's scouts had located the hostile camp.

Early one morning Two Moon and his three fellow scouts reached Dull Knife's camp and made their report. They promised their people "a big fight soon."

In those days it was the custom for the chiefs to detail each of the warrior societies in turn to govern the camp, and during the time a society was in charge of the camp no disobedience to their orders was tolerated. When Two Moon and the scouts got in, they found the Fox soldiers on duty, under the stubborn chief, Last Bull. Their report naturally alarmed many of the Cheyennes, but Last Bull was not impressed. If soldiers were coming to fight, let them come.

A big Sioux camp was not far away, and nearly all the chiefs, including the Keepers of the Medicine Arrows and the Medicine Hat, the two great mysteries of the tribe, wished to move out at once and join the Sioux. Last Bull forbade it.

Again they argued that they ought to dig trenches on the hillsides, in which their families could take refuge. Last Bull said "No."

Last Bull was determined to stay there and fight. When some of the people tried