

compell them to. Everything was in readiness to start for the country. It was expected that the animals would be self-sustaining on the grass which was usually abundant everywhere. Gen. Bracket's battalion had been dispatched and also a portion of the Sixth Cavalry, in advance of the force generally, so as to be on the grounds to receive the supplies, which were on their way by boat on the river.

The general chose Company I of the Seventh Cavalry as his body-guard. The general, being a regular army cavalry officer, was heard to say that this company was the best in personnel, best uniformed, best equipped and mounted, and the best drilled cavalry organization that he had ever seen. There were perhaps twenty-five men in the company who would have made a better executive officer than the man who commanded it, but as a drill master he had few equals.

The purpose was to have all the troops assembled somewhere in the country about or above Ft. Pierre, and from there to the Indian territory in a mass. After penetrating the Indian country above Pierre they came upon a large body of Indians in camp. Major House, with his battalion, was in advance. When he intercepted the Indians he attempted to parley with them and hold them until the balance of the command could come up, to whom he had sent notice. This, however, he was unable to do. With the appearance of the troops the Indians commenced at once to retreat. He then attempted to surround them to hold them, but found this impossible or impracticable with the force he had at his command. When the body of the troops had arrived the Indians were fairly in retreat. The troops followed them without firing upon them