

Many depredations having been recently committed by Indians in the vicinity of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers, it was ascertained that large numbers of hostiles, half-breeds, and foreign Indians, from British Columbia, including the Indians under Sitting Bull, were roaming upon United States territory, south of the boundary line. From a number of reliable persons who had seen the main hostile camp, this was estimated at not less than five thousand Indians, of whom two thousand were warriors, with twelve thousand horses. Half-breed Indians had<sup>87</sup> also been trading with the hostiles and furnishing them with ammunition, so in July Colonel Miles was sent from Fort Keogh, Mont., with a strong force to break up their camp, separate the doubtful Indians from those avowedly hostile, and force the foreign Indians to return north of the boundary.

Colonel Miles' force consisted of seven companies Fifth Infantry, seven troops Second Cavalry, a detachment of artillery, and some friendly Indians and white scouts. At Fort Peck he was joined by two companies of the Sixth Infantry, and his entire command then numbered thirty-three officers, six hundred and forty-three enlisted man, and one hundred and forty-three Indian and white scouts.

The hostiles consisted of the Uncapapas, under Sitting Bull, the Minneconjous, under "Black Eagle," the Sans Arcs, under "Spotted Eagle," and the Gallalas, under "Big Road" and "Broad Tail."

Colonel Miles reported that the depredations of the hostiles had resulted in the killing of not less than twenty men and the stealing of three hundred head of stock, all of which had been taken to the hostile camp.

As a preliminary step the Saultonnais camp of about three or four hundred lodges were first moved to the south side of the Missouri, about June 25.