

23
76

After I quit the agency I went to J.W. Deere's, out in Nebraska, on Snake river, on his ranch, and stopped. Deere and I were great friends before I was captured by the Indians. Got acquainted with him on the Missouri when I was carrying mail. I got acquainted with a great many officers, among them Capt. Egan of K company, Second regiment--'the White Horse Cavalry.' Deere had told me about the expedition which was outfitting for the winter campaign, and through Deere and Capt. Egan my name was sent to headquarters as a scout--as a man who knew the country.--and Deere told me that if there were any men hired he would send out and let me know.

So when they sent out orders to get men that were acquainted with the Indian country for scouts, Egan and Deere both thought that I would be just the man that they would want. They sent out for me to come in. I got in there along in the afternoon and was sent up to the Post to see the commanding officer, who told me I would have to go right over to Fort Laramie that night; that Gen. Crook was there and wanted to see me.

178

Port Laramie was ninety miles distant. I went over there on my horse that night, and reached there next morning at eight o'clock. I met Gen. Crook there, and also Louie Renshaw and Big Bat (Baptiste Fournier). That was the first time I ever met Big Bat. I had an interview with Gen. Crook. He asked me if I was acquainted with the country and I told him I was. Wanted to know if there was any possible show of jumping Indians there in the winter time. I told him if he worked it right there might be. He said he would give me one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month from the time I left the ranch. He said if I would furnish my own horse he would give me one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month. He said that he expected to start out the first of March. This conversation occurred in February.

Gen Crook gave orders to hire thirty men-- men who were supposed to know all about the country, and had good judgment. I had nothing to do with that. These men were to act as scouts, so by the time the expedition was ready to start from Fort Laramie, there were thirty-five of us. Col. Stanton was put in as chief of scouts. Everything was organized by the time we got to Fort Fetterman, forty miles up the Platte. It was the first of March when we started from there.

179

The names of the scouting party I can't remember, that is, all of them. Among them were Big Bat, Louie Renshaw, Louis Shangreau and his brother John, Charlie*Jenesse, Charles Reshaw, Little Bat (Baptiste Gaunier), Ben. Clarke, Tom Reed (who afterwards became a noted road agent), Speed Stagner (who at that time was guide at Fort Fetterman), Joe Eldredge, and others whose names have escaped my memory.

Nothing occurred until we got to Powder river. On reaching Powder river, Gen. Crook wanted us to go out on Tongue river and see if there were any signs of Indians in that part of the country. Leaving camp at dark we went out about three miles. There were six of us--Louie Renshaw, Big Bat, Little Bat, John Shangreau, Charles Jenness and myself. From where we stopped we could see the flash of guns at camp, so we knew that there was a fight of some kind going on. Turning around and going back to camp just after we left, firing into the tents, but no casualties occurred. The Indians fired a few shots and left, but it set the camp in a terrible uproar.

180

The next day the command moved over to Crazy Woman. That evening the general called a council from amongst the scouts, asking if he could cross over with the command to the forks of Clear creek--if it were possible to go through the badlands. He wanted to cut loose from the wagons. But there were none of the scouts able to take him through. He wanted to make the trip after night had set in. He asked me if I could take him through. I told him that I could. He asked me what the distance was, but I could not tell him the distance because I didn't know anything about miles. I told him I could tell him what time he could get there; that if he * would start after dark he could get