

187 me. Then I took four of them and started after the Indians to keep them out of sight of the command. The Indians*didn't wait for us, but just kept going. But they were out of the way of the command. They didn't see it. I was satisfied that they couldn't recognize whether we were Indians or whites. Probably they would think we were a war party of Crows, and go for camp as fast as they could. We went across Otter creek for convenience. The command had got there, and I told the General about it. It made me mad, because the scouts had got away from the command. I told him, that if he had kept the scouts away the Indians would not have known of our coming, and it would have been no trouble getting into their camp.

The General said he gave them orders but they escaped the command. He said he didn't think the command so close to me as it was. I explained that they were getting close to the Indians, and I could not tell how near we were, and that was the reason I had asked him to keep the scouts with the command. He asked me what I intended to do. I replied that I intended to jump the village tomorrow morning if he would give me four companies of cavalry. There were ten companies in the command. The General asked:

"Do you think you can find a village?"

I said, "I don't think anything about it; I know it."

"All right," he says; "I will give you six companies, and will keep four with the pack train. When do you want to start? "

"I want to start about an hour by sun, so I can reach the forks of Otter creek before dark," I replied.

188 I was going to follow the back tracks of the Indians, or * that was my intention. The General said he would have the horses fed that grain there was left--there was only one day's forage left--and that the cavalry would be ready to start by the time I wanted them, with Col. Reynolds in command.

Reynolds was Colonel of the Third cavalry. Gen. Crook gave the necessary orders, and then called the Colonel over to headquarters and gave him his orders in my presence, no other person being present. His orders were very strict--that we should jump the village and capture the horses, take all the dried meat we could get, and keep the Indian saddles and burn the village, and to hold the village until we could get a courier back to him. We were to capture the Indians if possible. That was the purport of Gen. Crook's verbal orders to Col. Reynolds.

Everything being ready, we started and reached the forks of Otter creek about sundown. Finding that the Indians we had seen had come down the left hand fork, I was almost satisfied where the village lay.