

196 I didn't send the scouts out! I just asked if there was anybody wanted to go, but there were only four men volunteered--Little Bat, John Shangreau, Buckskin Jack and another scout. We saddled our horses and started after the Indians. They were going in the way that Gen. Crook was coming from, and I thought most probably that I could meet him; and as the General had four companies of soldiers it would have been a sure thing that we could have taken the horses away * from the Indians. I overtook the Indians about two miles from camp, and had a kind of running fight with them until about 1 o'clock. We recaptured the horses and they got them back again. They did this two or three times. There were too many of them for us, and the last time we tried to recapture the ponies we charged in on them, and they shot Little Bat's horse out from under him, and left him afoot and he had to get on behind me.

It is not very pleasant, fighting the Indians in that fashion. They saw that one of us was afoot and came right down for us. I kept them at bay as much as I could, and finally they left us alone. We were about twenty miles from the river on the head of Otter creek when this occurred, and not meeting the General I turned around and started back. It was dark when we reached where the camp had been in the morning, but it had moved. We followed the trail right up Powder river. We went up about ten miles and saw the camp seven or eight miles above us. We could see the reflection from the camp fires.

197 On our way we ran into another lot of Indians. It was perfectly dark and cloudy and I heard something coming along the trail and waited for them to come up, and who should it be but some Indians driving horses. I sent one of the boys ahead of the horses the Indians were driving, and one of the scouts and myself went to head the horses off, and the other two scouts fired into the Indians. Not knowing how many there were of us, the Indians just dropped everything and ran. * We captured the horses, and Little Bat got an animal to ride from there to camp, and we drove the other animals in with us.

There were eleven head of horses. The horses had been stolen from George Harris, who lived on the Platte river. The Indians had been to Harris' place, driven off the horses, and were taking them down to Crazy Horse's camp, not knowing of the battle that had been fought there. So from there we were fired comfortably until we got into camp. We got within about half a mile of camp, when who should we meet but Gen. Crook, who had been watching for us. He came down and met us, saying he had been watching them ever since dark about one-half mile from the command. The first thing I knew he asked me if that was me, and I said it was, and he came and shook hands with me. He told me he had just caught up with the ranks, and had got into camp a little before sundown. I was plumb played out. I had been three nights without any sleep to amount to anything. The General didn't say much to me that night. When I got to camp, Captain Egan came over to where I was and says:

"Frank, I have something warm for you."

198 He took me over to his quarters and gave me a cup of coffee and some hot biscuits and butter, and I think that was the finest meal I ever ate in my life. After I got through eating the General told me to go to bed, and I don't believe it was over five seconds before I was asleep. The Indians and soldiers were fighting all night, but I never heard it. The General woke me the next morning, and the camp was about ready to move. I never knew anything about the fight. He asked me about everything that had occurred at the Crazy Horse battle and why the orders were not obeyed. I didn't spare them a bit in the world. I told him just how the whole thing had been run. He didn't say anything to them, but said that as Col. Reynolds was in charge of the command, he didn't want to take the charge away from him. He never said he was going to put him under arrest. He just simply sent to work and put him under arrest, and never told anybody. Reynolds was not relieved of his command until we got to Cheyenne.