

434

the occupation of the house and stable by the police, volunteers were called for to carry a report of the situation back to the approaching troops. Hawk Man offered to perform this perilous service, and at the imminent risk of his life. Assisted by*Red Tomahawk, he effected his escape, being shot through his coat and gloves while engaged in the attempt. This was the first scout met by the command.

My orders were explicit as to the arrest of Sitting Bull, but contemplated no pursuit of his band. I therefore did not feel authorized to follow the Indians up the valley, especially as I felt satisfied, from the report of Lieutenant Crowder, that it would only result, unnecessarily, in frightening peaceful Indians away from their homes, and that the withdrawal of the troops, together with the message I communicated to the Indians to the effect that only the capture of Sitting Bull was desired, would tend to re-assure those who were loyally disposed toward their agent.

Accordingly I gave orders for the command to withdraw to Oak creek, of which the commanding officer was informed by courier, with the request that he communicate his further orders to me at that point. Previous to leaving, word was sent up and down the valley to the friendly Indians of this movement, in order that they might avail themselves of the protection of the troops in their withdrawal to the agency, which they did in considerable numbers. All the dead Indian police, together with their wounded, and the body of Sitting Bull, were brought in by me.

Upon reaching Oak creek, at 6 p.m., I was met by a courier, who informed me that the commanding officer of Fort Yates, with two companies of infantry and ten days' supplies, would reach Oak creek some time in the night. Upon their arrival at 12 o'clock I turned over the command.*

The attention of the commanding officer is invited to the celerity of this movement. In brief, the command marched from here to Sitting Bull's camp and back to Oak creek in seventeen hours. This, with the ground covered in getting into position, and the demonstration to the right by Lieut. Crowder, made a total distance of at least seventy miles. It must be taken into consideration that the movement back to Oak creek, eighteen miles, was made very slowly. Thus, it will be seen that the march out, including the movements into position, were made at a rate of over six miles an hour. During the whole march the column moved steadily, without stretching out or closing up--a most satisfactory commentary upon the drill and discipline of the two troops composing my command. To say less would be a want of appreciation on my part of the command under my orders.

E.G. FECHET,
Captain Eighth Cavalry, Commanding.

.

ORDERS NO. 247
FORT YATES, N.D., DECEMBER 14, 1890

2. Captain E.G. Fechet, Eighth Cavalry, will proceed with troops F and G, Eighth Cavalry, the Hotchkiss gun and one gattling gun, to the crossing of Oak creek by the Sitting Bull road, for the purpose of preventing the escape or rescue of Sitting Bull, should the Indian police succeed in arresting him.