

The main body of the hostiles under Crazy Horse went in small companies toward the Yellowstone, near the Posder River, then up the Yellowstone to the Tongue River, and down that river to a point near Suicide Creek, where a winter camp was made in the heart of the buffalo country. This constituted the headquarters of the hostiles under Crazy Horse until March 1877, when the camp removed to the Powder River. Another portion, under Sitting Bull, took a more northerly course toward the Yellowstone and Glendive Creek. The winter camp of this chief was about two hundred miles north of the Tongue River toward the Dry Fork of the Missouri. He seems to have made frequent trips between the camps for consultation and to distribute ammunition, which he obtained by trade with the Red River half-breeds near the British boundary.

On the 18th of October a large force under Sitting Bull attacked a supply-train near Glendive Creek, ran off sixty mules, and retreated across the Yellowstone in the direction of Fort Peck. This movement was anticipated by Colonel Miles, who, with troops belonging to the just-completed cantonment at the mouth of Tongue River, started to intercept them, and camp upon their camp October 21. Under a flag of truce presented by the Indians, two councils were held with Sitting Bull and other leading men, at which the latter reiterated their old desire to be independent of the United States, their indifference to any government aid in the way of supplies and annuities, and their wish to be connected with agencies only to the extent of trading in ammunition; nor would they give any pledges of good faith. The second day's council was immediately followed by an engagement, in which the Indians were driven from their position and fled, closely pursued by the troops, a distance of 42 miles, until in the vicinity of Bad Route Creek, on the other side of the Yellowstone, the main body consisting of Minneconjoux and Sans Arcs, sued for peace on the terms which five days before they had rejected—unconditional surrender—and delivered up five of their number as hostages, viz, Red Skirt, White Bull, Black Eagle, Sun Rise, and Foolish Thunder. During the flight Sitting Bull with his immediate followers, succeeded in breaking away to the left, and escaped in the direction of Fort Peck. The hostages were taken to the Cheyenne River agency, and their people, estimated at from four to six hundred lodges, were placed, under the direction of Bull Eagle, Small Bear, and Bull and ordered to reach the Cheyenne River agency not later than December 2, five days being allowed them to provide a supply of buffalo-meat, and thirty to make the march. This arrangement seems to have been made in good faith by some of the leading men taking part in it; but their influence over the others was not great enough to prevent any but the immediate relatives of the hostages from again joining the hostile camp. On the 15th of November a new expedition, under General Crook, started from Fort Fetterman to again follow up Crazy Horse. On the 25th of that month a detached camp of Cheyennes was struck by a portion of his troops under General Mackenzie on the west fork of the Powder River, which resulted in the complete destruction of the village, and the loss to the Indians of all their ponies and camp equipage. The expedition then went down the Belle Fourche, and about the 1st of January returned to the cantonment, near Old Fort Reno.

On the 16th of December, five Sioux chiefs from the hostile camp on Tongue River, followed at a distance by twenty or thirty other Indians, approached the Tongue River post bearing the white flag; but while passing the camp of Crow scouts the five leaders were surrounded by twelve of their old enemies and instantly killed, whereupon their companions fled. The crows were forthwith disarmed and twelve of their horses, with other gifts, were immediately dispatched to the friends and relatives of those who had been killed. These presents were accompanied by assurances that no white man had taken part in the outrage. The Indians, though at first inclined to doubt the genuineness of these protestations, have since expressed their full belief that the troops were in no way responsible for the affair, and report their errand to have been to return some stolen horses.

After the surrender of October 28, Colonel Miles continued his operations against Sitting Bull. By sending three companies north of the Fork of the Missouri, and four more to operate on the Dry Fork, he succeeded on the 18th of December in striking the hostile camp near the head of the Red Water, Sitting Bull having crossed the Missouri near Wolf Point. The Indians were driven south across