

2
continued.

and unable to find water, the course was changed to a more northerly direction, as I did not think the stock would stand another dry camp with the hard work they were doing.

The sand was heavy and the days hot although the nights were cool. With this caase the main column reached Snake River at dusk after a 35 mile march, near what is called the "Kearney crossing" two of the Companies in advance being still further back en-route from Snake Creek ranche, received information at this point that no depredations had been committed on the Niobrara for forty miles below a point opposite us. In consequence of knowledge of the guides and information received from your office and from Major Thornburgh I intended to strike from this point to the Niobrara well down that river on the supposition that Indians striking for the Sioux camp would seeing us before we saw them endeavor to avoid us in pushing still further east. While this movement was taking place the Lieutenant Generals telegram in regard to the Sioux breaking out was received. At this time the Atmosphere was thick with smoke, a heavy column of smoke had the previous day been noticed to the north west which was supposed to be a prairie fire although it did not resemble one. After receipt of this telegram I supposed that the smoke of that and the previous day was caused by the Sioux Indians burning ranches on the Niobrara. Knowing that by that time the Cheyennes could by forced marched have passed me on the east, and being anxious for the citizens along the Niograra and for the small garrison of Camp Sheridan. I struck the Niobrara higher up than I had before intended and sent a courier into the post for information. Arriving on the Niobara I found that no depredations had been committed on that stream. A ranchman had that day ridden from a point 30 miles down the river with information that for 40 miles still further down (atotal of 70) no depredations had been committed. He also reported that Spotted Tail Indians had been camping and hunting as far down as the Niograra, and some of them across it, but that no Cheyenne had been heard of. Two Couriers from Camps Robinson, folowing my trail came upon Major Thornburgh, also upon my trail, and by them Major Thornburgh forwarded a request that I would send him water and food. I selected the best stock I had, and sent both to him. His command joined me on the