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ON THE TRACKLESS PRAIRIE AND A RACE FOR LIFE BY BUFFALO BILL FROM "TRUE TALES OF THE PLAINS"

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IN the fall of 1865 General Sherman and the Indian commissioners who were to make a treaty with the Arapahoes and Comanches in southwestern Kansas...

Our chief of scouts and guide at that time was Dick Curtis. The outfit was composed of three ambulances, with saddle horses for the general and Indian commissioners...

It was about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, after leaving the fort, that a young officer, one of the general's aids, was riding along talking to me...

He said, "Why don't you tell the general this? He is up there in the ambulance." I told him (the officer) that I was not guiding General Sherman...

The general remarked: "Well, then, Mr. Curtis, how far are we from the Springs? From the distance we have traveled since leaving Zarah at 2 o'clock this morning we should be very near them."

Mr. Curtis replied: "General, this is a very level country, as you can see. There are no landmarks, and there are so many thousands of buffaloes all over the prairie that it is pretty hard to tell just where we are and how far we are from the Springs."

The general, looking at the other scouts, said, "Do any of you know where the Springs are?" The young officer had pointed me out to the general, and he was looking straight at me when he asked the question.

One day in the spring of 1868 I mounted Brigham and started for Smoky Hill river. After galloping about twenty miles I reached the top of a small hill overlooking the valley of that beautiful stream.

My pursuers seemed to be gaining on me a little, and I let Brigham shoot ahead again. When we had run about three miles farther some eight or nine of the Indians were not over 200 yards behind, and five or six of these seemed to be shortening the gap at every jump.

As I was, and one of their horses in particular, a spotted animal, was gaining on me all the time. Nearly all the other horses were strung out behind for a distance of two miles, but still chasing after me.

The Indian who was riding the spotted horse was armed with a rifle and would occasionally send a bullet whistling along, sometimes striking the ground ahead of me.

The other Indians had gained on us while I was engaged in shooting at their leader, and they sent several shots whizzing past me, but fortunately none of them hit the intended mark.

The chase was kept up until we came within three miles of the end of the railroad track, where two companies of soldiers were stationed for the purpose of protecting the workmen from the Indians.

Captain Nolan of the Tenth cavalry now came up with forty of his men, and upon learning what had happened he determined to pursue the Indians.

He kindly offered me one of his cavalry horses, and after putting my own saddle and bridle on the animal we started out after the flying Indians.

When we got back to camp I found old Brigham grazing quietly and contentedly on the grass. He looked up at me as if to ask if we had got away with any of those fellows who had chased us.

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