

Bull, was soon flying away over the bench lands that lay south of Fort Walsh with his exclusive news of the failure of the conference.

It was dark when he left, but by pushing on all night, Healy had covered close to one hundred miles and was at Milk River by morning. Here he found a freighting outfit camped, and he obtained the loan of a mountain bred cayuse. After a hurried breakfast by the camp fire, he was away again. The trail over the plain was good but it was hard riding in the coulees. By mid-afternoon Healy began to feel a wrenching pain in his back. He stopped only long enough for water, eating hard tack and venison as he rode along. At Twenty-Eight Mile Springs he was able to make another horse change with a ranch man. From there to the Manas, he sped along as fast as his tough little ranch pony would carry him. His legs had become stiffened and seemed set in the saddle like a vise. The sand from the plain burned in his eyes until his vision became partly distorted. In twenty-four hours from the time he left, he was climbing over the hill into Fort Benton. As Healy dismounted at his own house, the horse he had ridden staggered, rolled over and fell to the ground.

After a hot bath and a bite to eat, Healy was off again. This time he had a finely-bred horse to make the run to Helena on the old stage road. He slept in the saddle, leaning over the horse's neck. Another horse was found at the end of sixty miles and the ride down Prickly Pear Canyon was made on schedule. The change of horses and a different gait was a great relief to his aching muscles. The last thirty miles were the most difficult. A good horse was found at the stage station and Healy, as he was so sore that he could hardly move, was lifted into the saddle. His head grew dizzy as he struck the Prickly Pear Valley, but his heart lifted when he saw the lights of Helena twinkling in the far distance. He braced himself for the last effort and, within an hour, the plucky horse and still pluckier rider were flying down the old diggings road. They

came around the corner of towering Mount Helena, and down again over the sharp foothills that mark the sides of the gulch, and then into Main Street. The sleepy telegraph operator heard a shout outside and opened a window. "Well", he asked. "War news for the *New York Herald*", yelled a voice and a bundle was tossed through the open window. The next morning the *Herald* had an exclusive report on the Terry Council meeting, three days after it had taken place. Healy had carried his despatches the 340 miles from Fort Walsh to Helena in forty-three hours, and the *Herald* had "scooped" the news of the failure of the Terry Conference.

The balance of the story of the Sioux stay at Wood Mountain is one of dogged determination by the totally inadequate force of policemen. The highest degree of courage, patience and tact, were required often with split-second timing. The task of the police remained the same, to prevent bloodshed and open warfare at all costs. By quiet, but persistent, representations to the lesser chiefs, Walsh was successful in starting small groups of the Sioux back south. The situation was complicated by some of the remaining Sioux venturing over the Line into the U.S.A. to hunt. This brought sharp repercussions from Washington and a reprimand for Walsh from Ottawa — for allowing starving Indians to hunt buffalo south of the Line.

Soon the Sioux were reduced to eating their horses, even dead ones. So pitiable was their plight that police personnel shared what they could of their own scanty rations. In July of 1880, Walsh was informed that Broad Tail, Dull Knife, Stone Dog and Little Hawk were taking their people to American posts on the Milk River. A year later, in May, 1881, Sitting Bull and the starving remnants of his once mighty people surrendered to Lieutenant Brotherford at Fort Buford. His surrender ended this epic story in Mounted Police history, which deserves to be far more widely known than it is. That this was accomplished, without the loss of a single