

the military scene he could hear bugles blowing at sunrise and sunset.

The Terry Commission camped east of the Fort Walsh stockade. The Sioux were camped to the north of the main gate of the fort. Sitting Bull had declined to enter the stockade, saying he had never been inside a white man's stockade before, and he did not desire to camp in one now.

The actual conference took place during the afternoon of October 17, 1877, in the officers mess room at Fort Walsh. The officials of the Terry Commission were seated at a small table, while the officers of the Mounted Police, in dress uniforms, were seated nearby. The American war correspondents were given every facility to observe the hearings. Sitting Bull entered the conference room and was seated on buffalo robes directly in front of Terry. He was accompanied by Spotted Eagle of the Sans Arcs of the No Bows, who, in the days before guns, hunted with the spear and knife. With them were Short Neck and Black Bull of the Uncapappas, a most formidable array of savage war lords. To add insult to the white man's conference, the squaw of chief The-Bear-that-Scatters was included in the group, an unheard of proceeding for an Indian War Council. From the very start of the talks it appeared as though the conference was doomed to failure. The Sioux had entered the room and shook hands cordially with the police officers, totally ignoring the Terry Commission.

General Terry opened proceedings by giving a glowing, if somewhat overdrawn, account of life on Indian reservations. The Sioux listened in stony silence until Sitting Bull rose and, in angry sentences, tore Terry's offer to pieces. He asked why the White men would come speaking with forked tongues and with blood on their hands, while still killing his people. He cried that in Montana the grass was stained with the Indians' blood, while in the country of the Great White Mother there was peace. Other Sioux chiefs said in effect, "I don't like you" and "You have come here to tell lies". The squaw of "The

Bear", let loose a torrent of invectives. When Terry asked the interpreter what she was saying, he turned quietly to Terry and, in a low voice, said, "She says, General, that you don't even give her time to breed".

The conference broke up almost in disorder. As the Sioux stalked from the room they shook hands effusively with the Police Officers, casting disdainful scowls at the Americans. The whole affair was a complete failure.

Healy's Great Ride

The *New York Herald* reported that a famous scout, Johnny J. Healy, who had crossed the Line with the General Terry contingent, had vowed to shoot Sitting Bull if the conference failed. The newspaper correspondents with the Commission told Healy he would be hanged if he shot the old chief. The story goes that Healy replied, "Give me ten minutes' start and all the Mounted Police in Canada won't catch me". It had been arranged that Healy would deliver the news of the conference for the *New York Herald*. When he was asked how long it would take him to get the despatches for the *Herald* through to Helena, some 340 miles away, which was the nearest telegraph office in Montana, he replied, "Forty-eight hours". "You can't do it in three days", said General Terry. "I will, and will take the news of Sitting Bull's death too", said Healy.

Healy had his thoroughbred horse picketed outside the fort, and waited with his rifle in hand, until he could find Sitting Bull alone. He finally found the old chieftain standing by his teepee, an easy mark for a good shot. But fate was kind to the old warrior that night, and perhaps to Healy too. Healy ran back to get his despatches and to take a quick check of his horse. He found his saddle horse entangled in its picket rope, and useless for a long ride. However, the despatches still had to go through. After some delay an army officer's horse was found, and Healy, forgetting about shooting Sitting