

with a guide, I proceeded in the direction of the Big Bend of Eel River. Encamped the night of the 14th on the Chick-hu-wa-pet, a small stream which empties into Eel River. Had I observed my usual caution I would have surprised a camp of Indians on this stream. They left in such haste on our approach that they neglected to take with them their camp equipage. As I had never been in this part of the district in search of Indians, I referred the matter to my guide (Fleming), who said it was not necessary to use caution until we arrived at the source of this stream. The following day (the 15th) I went to the head of the Chick-hu-wa-pet and encamped. The 16th I sent the guide and two Indians, a tracker and interpreter, to spy their fires. They returned on the 17th and reported having seen Indians on the North Fork of Eel River, about thirty miles from its mouth. The 18th I sent Lieutenant Winchill with fifteen men to attack them. In the meantime I scouted in the vicinity of my camp with the other portion of my detachment. I remained here until the 21st, when a messenger arrived from Lieutenant Winchill requesting me to move my provision train to Kitten Valley, fifteen miles distant, at which point he would join me. I did so. This was the farthest point from Fort Baker that I took my train during the scout. It is distant from Fort Baker about sixty miles. Lieutenant Winchill reported that on arriving at the North Fork of Eel River he surprised and captured an Indian. He compelled the Indian by threats (and a few practical illustrations in the shape of a stick on the back of what he might expect if he proved on trial to be a bad Indian) to take him to the place where the Indians could be found. The prisoner finally consented to guide him to the rancharia. He came on them as they were gathering grass-seed and clover. They were extended about a mile along the bank of the river; the squaws busily at work, and the bucks, or Indian men, were armed and on the lookout for any enemy that might attack them, but the lieutenant was too quick for them. He deployed his men to the right and left so as to flank them, in which he succeeded. The river was high, the water very cold; the Indians preferred fighting to swimming. The prisoner attempting to run was shot. The engagement was short but sharp, the Indians disputing every inch of ground left them until they were all killed. Private Lynch, a brave but rash man, seeing three Indians going in a rocky place, followed them in. One of the Indians shot him through the heart. He called to Sergeant Thoman to come to his assistance. The sergeant hurried to the spot, but the poor man was dead. The sergeant shot and killed the Indian, and was in the act of reloading his rifle when another Indian, who was standing in the river, shot an arrow which struck the sergeant's cap-box, passed through the box and waist-belt. The box saved his life. The Indian was preparing to shoot the second arrow, but a ball from the sergeant's pistol went crashing through his brain. Owing to the distance from our camp Lynch was buried where he fell. Ten bucks and one squaw were found dead after the engagement. The lieutenant took all the squaws and children he could find and arrived at Kitten Valley on the 22d. As soon as it became sufficiently dark to prevent the Indians from seeing my men, I went to the North Fork and selected a ford. It was very difficult to cross, as the river was much swollen, about four feet deep and 100 yards wide. I crossed twenty men by midnight, and sent the rest back to camp. Went up the river two miles and remained until daylight; raining all the time very hard. At daylight went down on the river; found fresh sign; sent the Indians