

HOW SITTING BULL GOT HIS NAME

By White Bull

When Sitting Bull was about six years of age his folks were living on the banks of Grand River. Like all Indian lads he was taught to get up early and attend to the horses, learn to ride, to shoot with bow and arrow, swim, play all kinds of games, sing and dance and if occasion demands to go hunting or on the war-path.

One morning just about daybreak, Sitting Bull whose nickname was hunkesni -- meaning Slow, woke up to look for horses. This he did on foot and had the grand opportunity to observe everything on the way, the singing of birds, the howling of coyotes, deer watering on the river bank and in fact everything that nature offered.

He was enjoying this morning's hike immensely, and was singing and humming some new tune he had heard recently for he was a great lover of music. Just as he had reached a high hill, viewing the scenery all round him he heard some kind of a noise and looking down he saw a buffalo bull in a sitting position. Hunkesni did not have any weapon of any kind so became scared -- stood there in awe -- but the bull was looking at him in such a manner that he could not break away from it. But the bull did not show any sign of harming him. At last, the bull resumed its natural position, lifted up its tail, pawed upon the ground and quietly went its way.

Hunkesni was glad that he was not harmed by the animal, gave another look at it and said, "Tatanka Iyotake onsi mayala yelo -- pili mayaya -- ohocila kta." "Sitting Bull, you've pitied me-- thank you. I respect you."

Finding the horses he went home and related about the bull to his father. His father called the camp crier and ordered him to proclaim to the people, owing to the strange incident between the boy and the animal, that from that day hence, Hunkesni shall be known as Tatanka Iyotaki-Sitting Bull.