

SITTING BULL RESTORES A CROW WOMAN CAPTIVE

By Bear Soldier

In the year 1873 -- about five years after Sitting Bull was declared chief, the Hunkpapas were inhabiting the region round the Slim Buttes in South Dakota.

The Crows and the Sioux were still at war against each other. The party of Hunkpapas had returned with a Crow woman as captive with them. The warriors told the chief that the woman was captured and brought home, subject to his discretion -- (thinking the old chief would retain her as a wife) Sitting Bull accepted the offer. He requested his sisters to receive the Crow woman in their tipi. Then they brought to their lodge, the sisters took out valuable clothing, beads buckskin dresses, blankets leggings, moccasins and other articles of clothing and dressed up the captive woman.

While this was in progress, Sitting Bull brought a fine saddle horse all equipped for service. He called the warriors who had brought the woman, together with the headmen of the camp and as soon as they assembled he made the following speech: "My friends and Relatives, you have favored me with a very fine looking woman. I thank you for this. She has become a member of our family. I have already two wives who are sisters. It would be a folly to try and add another woman in our lodge. She is a stranger brought here against her will. My sisters have done their part by their valuable gifts to her. I am going to obey my conscience by sending her back to her home and people under an escort. I do not wish to hold her as a prisoner."

He placed the woman on the horse he had brought and two of the most trustworthy warriors were detailed to escort the captive woman toward the land of the Crows.