

Story of Custer Battle -- by Tasina-mani-win.

"I was born seventy-seven winters ago, near Grand River, S.D. My father, Slohan, was the bravest man among our people. Fifty-Five years ago we packed our tents and went with other Indians to Peji-sla-wakpa (Greasy Grass). We were then living on the Standing Rock Indian reservation. I belonged to Sitting Bull's band. They were great fighters. We called ourselves Hunkpapa. This means confederated bands. When I was still a young girl (about seventeen) I accompanied a Sioux war party which made war against the Crow Indians in Montana. My father went to war 70 times. He was wounded nearly a dozen times.

"But I am going to tell you of the greatest battle. This was a fight against Pehin-hanska (General Custer). I was several miles from the Hunkpapa camp when I saw a cloud of dust rise beyond a ridge of bluffs in the east. The morning was hot and sultry. Several of us Indian girls were digging wild turnips. I was then 23 years old. We girls looked towards the camp and saw a warrior ride swiftly, shouting that the soldiers were only a few miles away and that the women and children including old men should run for the hills in an opposite direction.

"I dropped the pointed ash stick which I had used in digging turnips and ran towards my tipi (teepee). I saw my father running towards the horses. When I got to my tent, mother told me that news was brought to her that my brother had been killed by the soldiers. My brother had gone early that morning in search for a horse that strayed from our herd. In a few moments we saw soldiers on horseback on a bluff just across the Greasy Grass (Little Big Horn) river. I knew that there would be a battle because I saw warriors getting their horses and tomahawks.

"I heard Hawkman shout, Ho-ka-he! Ho-ka-he! (Charge). The soldiers began firing into our camp. Then they ceased firing. I saw my father preparing to go to battle....I sang a death song for my brother who had been killed.

"My heart was bad. Revenge! Revenge! For my brother's death. I thought of the death of my young brother, One Hawk. Brown Eagle, my brother's companion on that morning had escaped and gave the alarm to the camp that the soldiers were coming.