

HOW SITTING BULL MET DEATH

BY EDWARD B. CLARK
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WASHINGTON.—Memories of Indian wars fade rapidly from the minds of all persons who were not actively engaged in the hostilities. In the east the troubles in the past on the frontier held the attention and the interest but for the moment. No easterner ever gave full credit to the officers and the men of the United States army who faced danger and withstood hardship after hardship with precious little hope of any reward save the consciousness of duty well done.

It is probable that not one person in a hundred can name the battle fought only 18 years ago and in which the casualties to the small force of the regular army engaged amounted to 90 men killed and wounded. That battle was the battle of Wounded Knee, and to-day it is nearly lost to the recollection of the masses. There are several officers now stationed in Washington who had a part in that Dakota fight. The fight between Col. Forsythe's men of the Seventh cavalry and the band of Big Foot, the Sioux, was the result of the ghost-dance craze which had been started and fostered by the great chief Sitting Bull, on whose hand was the blood of Custer and his men. Sitting Bull was shot and killed by Indian police while resisting arrest, but he was killed too late to prevent the spread of the doctrine which he preached and which had run like prairie fire among the men of his nation. There were all sorts of stories circulated concerning



tion of a part of the people who preferred death to exile. The Cheyennes broke away. A battalion of infantry was thrown across their tracks but the wily savages eluded all save a few of the soldiers, who in a



THE DEATH OF SITTING BULL.

the death of the great Sioux chief. Philanthropists in the east who never had seen an Indian tepee insisted that Sitting Bull was murdered and that the blood of the savage was upon the head of the nation.

It was left to Col. Edward G. Fecchet, now professor of military science at the University of Illinois, to learn the truth of the shooting of Sitting Bull and to give knowledge of it to the people. Col. (then captain) Fecchet made one of the hardest rides known to the troops of the plains before he secured the facts in the case of the passing of the great Sioux chief to the happy hunting grounds.

Sitting Bull's home was in a log hut on the Standing Rock Indian reservation of North Dakota. In the summer of 1890 he gathered many of his braves about him and told them in picturesque Sioux language that a Messiah was to come who would lead the Sioux nation to victory; that the whites would be annihilated; that the buffalo would come back, and that the red man would once more take possession of the earth.

Through the medicine men Sitting Bull worked so upon the feelings and the superstitions of his warriors that they came to believe that by wearing certain garments which were called ghost shirts their bodies would be safe from the bullets of the soldiers.

When Gen. Miles learned of the teachings of Sitting Bull and of their rapid spread, the chief's arrest was ordered. Accordingly Indian police led by Lieut. Bull Head and Sergt. Shave Head were dispatched from Fort Yates to arrest the chief at his log hut miles away. Capt. Fecchet of the Eighth cavalry was ordered with his command, consisting of two troops, and, if memory serves, two light field pieces, to make a night march to Oak Creek, about 18 miles from Sitting Bull's house, there to receive the prisoner when he was turned over by Lieut. Bull Head.

Capt. Fecchet and his men reached the rendezvous at 4:30 a. m. on one of the coldest mornings of a Dakota December day. There was no sign of the Indian police, nor yet of the scout which Bull Head was to send in advance to inform the cavalry officer of his coming.

Fecchet's soldier instinct told him at once that there must be trouble. His men had had the hardest kind of a night ride, but they were willing, and he pushed forward rapidly. After he had made several miles he was met by a scout who was riding like mad. The runner told Fecchet that all the Indian police who had gone to arrest Sitting Bull had been killed by the ghost dancers, and that there were thousands upon thousands of them fully armed and in their war paint ready for battle.

Fecchet looked over his small command and went ahead at full gallop, his only thought being to save such of the policemen as might be alive, and giving no heed to the other thought that ahead of him might be overwhelming numbers of the savages and the fate of Custer. It was a terrible ride from that time on.

When the morning was a little advanced the men of the command heard firing, which seemed to come from different points. On they went until they came to the brow of the hill. Below

them at a distance was the house of Sitting Bull, and in front of it, some hundreds of yards away, was a horde of ghost dancers engaged in emptying their rifles into the log building, from which came a feeble return fire.

Capt. Fecchet had his Hotchkiss thrown into action and he dropped a shell in front of the ghost dancers, and then the command charged down the hill.

The shell had its frightening effect on the savages, who held aloof though still pouring in their fire, which was answered by the soldiers as Fecchet himself took a rapid course to the log house, with his life in his hands every step of the way.

Inside the hut were found three of the Indian policemen dead and three mortally wounded. The wounded, resolved on exacting a price for their coming death, were still using their rifles against the besieging foe. The soldiers finally drove the savages to flight.

The few that were left living of the little force of Indian police told this story. Lieut. Bull Head had arrested Sitting Bull and had led the chief from his cabin only to be confronted by hundreds of crazed savages. Catch-the-Bear and Strike-the-Kettle, two of Sitting Bull's men, strode through the Indian ranks, raised their rifles and fired. Bull Head was shot through the body. Dying, he turned quickly and killed Sitting Bull. Strike-the-Kettle killed Sergt. Shave Head. Instantly Policeman Lone Man killed Catch-the-Bear. Then the surviving policemen sought shelter in the cabin and held off the ghost dancers as has been told.

With the Rosebud, Standing Rock and Pine Ridge Sioux, who went on the warpath in December, 1890, were a few stalwart warriors of the tribe of the Northern Cheyennes. That the Cheyenne braves were so limited in number was due to the fact that 12 years before the nation, exiled and longing for its old home, had met with practical annihilation in the attempt to regain it.

The Northern Cheyennes had been sent to a reservation in the Indian territory following one of the uprisings against the whites. Their hearts they left behind them in their old home and the warriors yearned to return.

Late in the fall of the year 1878 the Cheyenne braves, taking advantage of the temporary absence of their soldier guardians, gathered together their women and their children and dashed northward in the direction of the land where their fathers had lived from the time back of the beginning of tradition.

They had been told by the Indian agents and by the soldiers, who acted under orders, that they never could take the trail back to the north, but they paid no heed to what was told them, but gathering their possessions they set out.

The Cheyennes' love of home, natural and sympathy-compelling to everyone except to those who thought that an Indian should have naught to do with home-sickness, was the cause of the destruc-

CORONEL FECHET



FECHET LED HIS LITTLE COMMAND IN A WILD DASH ON THE INDIANS.

sharp skirmish lost their commander, Maj. Lewis. The Cheyennes broke away. A battalion of infantry was thrown across their tracks but the wily savages eluded all save a few of the soldiers, who in a sharp skirmish lost their commander, Maj. Lewis.

The trail led to one of the low hills that chain the reservation. The Cheyennes had taken refuge near the summit in a natural hollow. The sides of the hills rose sheer and slippery to the lurking place of the savages. It was a place admirably adapted for defense. A few men could hold it against a regiment.

Capt. Wessels, in command of the cavalry, saw that the attempt to take the hilltop by assault would be to sacrifice the lives of half of his men. He threw a cordon around the hill, knowing that the warriors could not escape, and trusting that in a few hours hunger would force them to surrender. Meantime the Cheyennes were active. They picked off many a trooper, and at noon on the day following the night of their flight a ball struck Capt. Wessels in the head. The wound was not serious, but its effect was to make captain and men eager for a charge. Capt. Wessels went to the front of his troops and prepared to lead them up the slippery hillside in the face of the fire of the best Indian marksmen on the great plains.

All things were prepared for the charge, when to the amazement of the troopers, the whole band of Cheyenne warriors, naked to the waist and yelling like devils, came dashing down the hillside straight at the body of cavalry. The Indians had thrown away their rifles and were armed only with knives. They were going to their death and they knew it, but death was better than a return to the reservation which they hated.

Wessels and his troopers of the Third cavalry tried to spare the Cheyennes, but the warriors would have death at any cost. With their knives they plunged into a hand-to-hand conflict with the troopers and before they were slain they exacted a price for their dying.

When the time came for the burial of the Indians, Tea Kettle, a chief, was found to be alive, but unconscious. Tea Kettle was carried back to the fort and there made comfortable.

A squaw sought the wounded warrior's couch and handed him a pair of scissors which he instantly plunged into his heart. He spurned life in the knowledge of the fact that his brother braves were dead.

The Sioux nation heard of the bravery of the Cheyennes and they adopted the women and children, and some of the boys, grown to manhood, went with the Sioux on the warpath in their last great uprising.

CODE OF TRAMPDOM

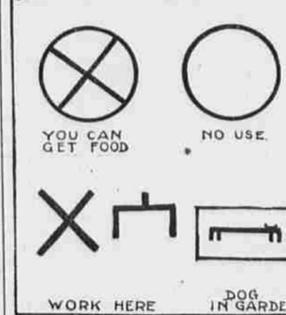
HIEROGLYPHICS USED BY TRAMPS AND HOBOS.

Interesting Code of Signals Made Use of by Homeless Wanderers in Country Districts to Warn Others Following.

Readers of stories about the tramp and his ways are, perhaps, inclined to take what they read with a grain of salt, but this much may be said with a certainty: Tramps do have a system of signs and symbols, by which they communicate with their brethren on the road. When the New York police recently opened the new municipal lodging house, they discovered in the process of moving from the old building a piece of paper, apparently left behind by some forgotten lodger. Some peculiar characters on the paper attracted notice and an examination of the accompanying handwriting, which, by the way, bore evidence that the writer had at one time been a man of culture and training, showed that the hieroglyphics were none other than a code of signals of trampdom. That these signs are used by the tramp fraternity is well known to those who dwell in country districts. They have often noticed strange marks, meaningless to them, gracing their gate-post or barnyard fence. It is the language of the tramp, to whom each sign has its own meaning. The accompanying cut is a reproduction of the signs and interpretations found in the New York municipal lodging house.

It is not a difficult task, in examining some of these hieroglyphics, to see why they should have been selected. At any rate, one may hazard a guess on the subject. There is the symbol used to inform the fraternity of an arrest; it represents prison bars, no doubt. Notice the warning that a dog is in the garden, by a stretch of the imagination, the rectangular figure might be taken to denote a garden, and the queer little figure inside, with the four vertical lines, might very well be the dog itself. "Work here" is also open to amateur analysis. The cross probably refers to the saw horse, commonly used in chopping wood, while the other symbol might conceivably indicate the saw, although it would be hard to convince many that a saw built on such lines would prove an effective implement, even in the hands of the most skillful hobo.

"Get out of the town as quick as possible" is self-explanatory. Seemingly, when tramps set eyes on that token, theirs is not to reason why, but merely to leave the arrows far behind. The symbols for "no use" and "you can get food" were probably chosen for their simplicity; if any other sig-



Signs and Symbols of the Tramp.

nificance attaches to them, it is unknown except to the favored few. But the amateur investigator reaches the end of his rope when he tackles the symbols which tell the reader to "pick a yarn," because there are "women in the house." Apparently, "women in the house" is good news to the tramp with a tearful bad luck story to relate. But whatever bearing these particular symbols may have on the matter is not to be answered.

Quieted Him at Last.

He was one of those inquisitive individuals one meets on shipboard who persist in boring the captain with nonsensical questions. For 20 minutes the captain had answered the volley of interrogations with a smiling face, but now he was losing his patience.

"But, captain," insisted the bore, "is it really true that we have fresh vegetables all the way over?"

"It is, sir," responded the master, "and now I must be getting—"

"And fresh meats?"

"Yes, sir, and as I said—"

"And fresh milk?"

"Yes, but you will have to excuse me as—"

"Just one more, captain."

"Well, what is it? Be quick."

"Where do you get your fresh milk from at sea?"

The captain made a megaphone of his horny hand and roared: "From our herd of sea cows that follow in our wake, sir. Look over the stern at eight bells and you will see the stewards milking them."

Pauperism Increasing in England.

There were more paupers in England than ever at the end of January despite old age pensions, the proportion in London being the highest since 1881, according to the government return just published. The total number of paupers in England and Wales was 850,460, of whom 288,831 were in-door. The proportion a thousand of population was 24.1 an increase of .5 from last year and of .3 in indoor paupers. The total in London was 133,226, a proportion of 27.8.

PENSIONS

Points for Soldiers and Sailors and Their Heirs

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Information for soldiers and sailors and their heirs, who are invited to make use of this column for such information as they desire relative to pension matters. Letters stating full name and address of writers should be addressed to C. E. Jones, Washington, D. C. In replying thereto, only the initials of correspondents will be quoted.

Detroit, Mich.

Query—My mother has not lived with my father for a number of years, owing to the fact of his desertion. We have heard incidentally that he has procured a divorce from her. He had no grounds for a divorce as he deserted my mother without cause. He is now living in another state and drawing a pension of \$55 per month. My mother wants to apply for one-half of his pension. She is in poor circumstances and in feeble health. What should she do about the matter?—Mrs. Margaret L. McEl.

Answer—If the divorce was granted your father, the soldier pensioner, your mother is not now his legal wife and therefore cannot get one-half of his pension under the provisions of the act of March 3, 1899. If it can be shown that the divorce was illegally obtained and is set aside by the court, your mother's rights as the wife of the soldier would be restored and she could then apply for one-half of his pension under the act of March 3, 1899, and obtain the same, if she could show to the satisfaction of the commissioner of pensions that she was the legal wife of said pensioner, a woman of good moral character and in necessitous circumstances.

City, C. V. A.

Query—Please advise me through your pension column whether a widow is entitled to a pension under the following circumstances: The woman is the widow of a union officer mustered out of the service with the rank of brigadier general after the close of the war. A bill was presented to congress in her behalf for a pension of \$50 per month, but she married again, an ex-confederate officer who has since died. Her first husband had a fine military record, but never applied for a pension, although deserving one. Is the widow pensionable under existing laws? If so, how can she secure a pension on account of the service of said first husband?—J. T. C.

Answer—The widow referred to would be entitled to pension under the general law on account of the service of her first husband, the union officer, from the date of his death to the date of her remarriage to the ex-confederate officer, provided she can show that he died from disability due to service and line of duty.

Dayton, O.

Query—What is the highest rate of pension a soldier can get for the loss of foot due to railroad accident? The soldier served in the regular army and was discharged out west and was returning to his home when the accident, by which he lost his right foot, occurred. He is now 63 years of age. Is he also entitled to pension under the age act?—James T. S.

Answer—It will not be possible for the soldier to whom you refer, to obtain pension through the pension bureau for the loss of right foot, as he cannot show that it was due to service and line of duty; the loss of said foot resulting from an accident subsequent to his discharge from the service. He would be entitled to \$12 per month pension at his age, under the act of February 6, 1907, if he served 90 days in the civil war and received an honorable discharge therefrom.

City.

Query—Please inform me through your pension column what rate of pension the widow of John Early, the leper, would receive in case of his death.—John K. D.

Answer—The widow of John Early would be entitled to \$12 per month pension, as the widow of a private soldier, and two dollars additional for each child under 16 years of age, from the date of his death, provided his death is due to service and line of duty.

Dummy Soldier's Long Walk.

Walking day and night, without a single stop, a dummy soldier is making 100,000 steps every 24 hours in an endurance test to determine the life of several new cartridge belts which are under consideration by the board of ordnance and fortification of the army. The dummy's tour of duty is at the Rock Island (Ill.) arsenal. The dummy is the size of an average soldier. By a special mechanical apparatus it is made to walk, with the guidance of a wire cable, as though on sentinel duty, in a circle in one end of a hall. The mechanism is such as to give the dummy the same motion as would be experienced by the average soldier in walking. About the waist of the figure are strapped the various belts, one at a time, which are being tested. Each is filled with the regulation cartridges, the principal test being made with the sharp-nosed bullets, to determine how long it will take for these to wear through the pockets of the belts. —Chicago Daily News.