



*Sitting Bull*

## *Dakota Images*

Sitting Bull, a chief of the Hunkpapa Sioux, was born about 1834. Some authorities say he was born on Willow Creek, a branch of the Bad River that flows into the Missouri at Pierre; others say that he was born on the Grand River.

In 1868 Sitting Bull was among the Indians who opposed the Treaty of Laramie. He realized that the reservation system was no solution for the Indians because it meant subservience to the whites. He was also a prominent figure at the great council on the Powder River eight years before the fight on the Little Big Horn. However, the exact part that he played in the fight against Custer is unknown. In reality, the great achievement of the Sioux in that battle was in bringing together a body of warriors greater than any of the white men knew, until it was too late. There is uncertainty as to whether Sitting Bull fought in the battle that day or if he stayed in the camp and made medicine. Whatever he did on the day of the fight, he deserves the credit for bringing this array of fighting power together.

After returning from Canada in 1881, he was sent to the Standing Rock Agency. From that time until his death, he continued his hopeless attempt to maintain his position as leader of the Sioux and to win for his people a measure of status on their land.

In the fall of 1890 the warriors at Sitting Bull's village became involved in the ghost dance craze. James McLaughlin, the agent at Standing Rock, using the dances as an excuse, had Sitting Bull arrested. On 15 December 1890, forty-three Indian policemen appeared in Sitting Bull's camp. When Sitting Bull refused to go with them, a melee of shots were fired and Sitting Bull was killed.

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