August 28
Jim White-Calf

Additional Notes on the Building of the Piskun.

They didn't have anything to cut poles with so they pulled them down and burned the branches and roots off.

Winter came and they were starving and had nothing to eat and there were no buffalo. A girl, a slave wife--the men had several wives in those days--and the youngest woman in those days was the slave wife and if she had three of four sisters they all had to marry this man. There was a chief who had several wives and the youngest one was the slave wife and one day she went out to bring in some wood. While she was out in the brush gathering up wood in the snow she came to an old fallen log, a very old and a very big one, and she heard a strange noise. It was an Indian song and some one was singing it. While this singing was going on she heard these words to the song " Woman, come and get me. I am medicine. I have great power as medicine." Hearing this strange noise she seeked for the singer but she couldn't find it. She continued looking for it and finally she went to the log and there was some loose bark and she discovered a stone a buffalo stone. It was on some buffalo hair. She picked up the stone and folded it up and stuck it away under her clothing for she knew it had power back of it.

One night the stone told her "I pity your people and you because you are a poor woman. I know your troubles for you have had a hard winter. You get someone for a buffalo caller and you have a medicine ceremony and you go in and take part in the song. It will be cold in the morning but the first thing you will find is a great big old buffalo and you will have some meat".

The people were starving and they started the medicine ceremony. They sang nearly all night. Midnight came and the buffalo came and when the dawn broke they saw a big buffalo and they told the people not to harm it. The next morning the scout was out and it was cold and he saw a large herd of buffalo. They built the Piskun and prepared for the big hunt. So it was the woman's turn to act as the medicine woman in the ceremony and she began

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to sing She said to the buffalo caller to get some sweet grass for a smudge and then he started to braid the grass and it was placed on top of the live coals and as the braid burned they shoved it further into the coals. This was bringing in the buffalo! While the ceremony was going on the Chief was taking part and the woman instructed him to call the buffalo caller. They sent him after the buffalo. Some went to the hill and they saw him bringing the buffalo. They told the dogs to be quiet and the children to cease crying or they would frighten the buffalo. During this time the last of the braves went back and hid behind these V shaped rocks where the buffalo came in. All this time the woman had the buffalo stone and kept burning the sweet grass. After the buffalo had passed beyond the V shaped line the buffalo caller hid so the buffalo would come right on. As the buffalo came along the hunters who were behind the rocks that formed this V shaped line jumped up and followed them to the high bank. It was the buffalo rock and the woman who had the rock was the one who really brought the buffalo in. After the buffalo were in the Piskun and they had shot them they would know how many they had killed by finding there own arrow heads.

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