

This essay was written for a class that I took during my freshman year of high school. It has been retyped to remove the teacher's comments and to correct typographical errors. Besides those insignificant corrections, it is in its original form down to the font it was typed in. The Questions and Answers section has been reformatted from a single block of paragraph to having each question in its own paragraph. I interviewed my dad to obtain this history. Much of the report is exact quotes from our interview. My dad used the term Indian as many did at the time.

The name Longgale has been in my mind since the writing of this essay. It has been a curiosity to me and a history I pride my lineage in having. I played with the idea of writing a story with Longgale as the surname of a main character, but that idea never solidified for me. Then, when thinking of using a pen name, Longgale was my immediate and only consideration. Deciding against using a penname, I used it as my website's domain. Thus, Longgale.com.

The Lawrence Family Legend

Five or six generations ago our ancestors were being forced to move onto their reservation. It was located somewhere on the Turtle Mountain reservation. The Turtle Mountains are called that because they are actually thousands of hills that look like turtle shells about 150 to 300 feet high; they are located in the northern central part of North Dakota.¹ Both the hills and reservation still exist today. The family name of this group, at the time, was Longgale. They were considered a renegade band. Up until 1876 they had been a large band of more than 60 rebellious men and women, not counting their children. They had roamed through our present-day North Dakota and deep into Montana. They got their reputation of being renegades because they stayed mainly to themselves. They also resisted the white man, who they thought wanted to kill them. They did not even associate much with the two tribes they were related to, the Chippewa and Sioux. They considered themselves Lakota.²

During the year of 1876 more than half the band had been killed, this included women and children, due to the attacks by the U.S. Cavalry in the battle of The Little Big Horn. Most of them were men who had fought in the battle.

Over the next few decades, the Longgales that were left alive and frightened were moved onto their Turtle Mountain Reservation. They moved onto several farm plots and built houses on them. The government told them that they must farm to continue living. Shell Longgale, one of the elders by this time, did not do well on the farm. It had deeply bothered him that the Indian agent would not let them hunt the cattle the government provided for the Native Americans who lived there. He could not understand why the people had to feed the cows when they could easily get their own food. It made no sense to him to keep them in buildings and fences so you had to bring them food. The white man's way made no sense to him. "Let the cattle be free to eat. We will find them when we need food. Why make work?" he would say over and over after they were forced onto the reservation.

Shell Longgale also maintained that the wars were not over. He always said, "It will be just days before the white man will attack and drive us off this land, too." He often talked about

how it would happen; Shell would point to the east, slightly south, and say, "The white man's way will be to come over the hill at sunrise so the sun will be at their backs." Every morning, just before sunrise, he did his custom: to take his rifle to a spot on a rise just west of the hill, the one he expected the soldiers to come over. He said that he would make his last stand here and fight and die alone if necessary. One morning a cavalry sergeant³ came riding over the hill. The sun was directly at his back. Shell shot him, thinking he was the first of an attacking party which happened about 35 years after the battle of the Little Big Horn.

When it came out that he had killed a lone soldier after the war was officially over, the white man's army started a manhunt. Instead of running, Shell Longgale moved next door which back then was considered to be anywhere from 2 to 15 miles away. They changed his name and the family name to Lawrence. Often the army would come asking about Longgale. Shell would always be the spokesperson and sound very helpful. He would tell the army things like, "Oh, that Longgale renegade. I saw him and his group last week at such and such place." Alternatively, "They rode through here three days ago heading south." The search went on for three summers. I have heard that Shell Lawrence acted as a scout on two expeditions to assist in the capture of Shell Longgale. He said that he needed white man money for his medicine, and whiskey. In addition, he would add, "Who would know the Longgales' ways better than me?" He would grin and wink. For some reason, Shell Longgale was never captured. I wonder why?

Over the years that followed, Shell Lawrence went from being a great military fighter to a political fighter. He realized that the white man was no longer a threat to his family by taking their land by military force. What he saw was that the white man was going try to buy the land that had things on it that was valuable to the white man for far less than the land was worth, to him. The land and the animals were life itself to the Native Americans; they were far more valuable than any objects money could buy. He spoke out every chance he had to convince the chiefs not to sign any treaties or agreements with the whites that included selling any land or land rights. It seems that his efforts paid off.

The United States government made an offer to buy a large tract of Indian land for 10 cents per acre. At the time the going price for any land was at least 50 cents per acre. The treaty

was drawn up and signed by every chief except one. A chief name Little Shell did not sign the treaty. His signature was necessary for the treaty to take effect. Consequently, many years later, the United States was required to pay the Chippewa tribe an additional 20,000,000 dollars. It is not know if Chief Little Shell was related to Shell Lawrence. However, many people believe that he was influenced by him.

Questions and Answers

Do the mountains still exists, if so do they look the same? Where are they located? The Turtle Mountains are thousands of hills about 150 to 300 feet high in the northern part of North Dakota. They still exist. So does the reservation that was named after them.

What is a renegade? Renegade means a group of almost rebels. You should look this word up.

Who are the two tribes? The tribes are Chippewa and Sioux.

What does Lakota mean? Lakota and Dakota are the major tribal names that the Sioux and many of the tribes belonged to. I think it is called the nation.

Did we fight in that? Our group did fight. That is how so many died. The few decades were after the battle of The Little Big Horn. That should be added in.

Who was the agent? Who the agent is does not matter.

Who were the cattle provided for? In addition, the cattle were provided for the Indians.

Do we know when he said that? He would say this over and over again after they were forced onto the reservation.

What year did he kill the soldier? About 35 years after Little Big Horn.

What exactly was considered next door? Next door could be anything from 2 to 15 miles. This was almost a universal belief of the American Indians. They felt connected to and a part of nature and the land itself.

Do we know what the chief names are? Little Shell is the only chief I know.

1. They became a sedentary people who depended for food on fishing, hunting, and gathering wild rice. Their main dwelling place was their wigwams (<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/society/A08364.html>)
2. Lakota (La *ko *ta): a member of the western division of the Dakota peoples.
3. The public does not know the cavalry sergeant's name.