

Deadwood Daily Pioneer Times – December 5, 1928

Claimed to Have Been Last of Custer's Men

HOT SPRINGS, Dec. 4 – Peter Thompson, aged 75, said to be the last authentic survivor of the Indian battle time of the Custer massacre, the Little Big Horn*, died at the Battle Mountain Sanitarium here today.

LEAD DAILY CALL – December 5, 1928

VETERAN OF CUSTER'S BATTLES SUCCUMBS TODAY

HOT SPRINGS, Dec. 5** – Peter Thompson, 75, said to be the last authentic survivor of the Indian battle at the time of the Custer massacre, died in the Battle Mountain sanitarium here today.

Well-Known Here

Old timers of Lead and the Northern Hills will learn of the death of Mr. Thompson with great regret, for he was a resident here for many years, and is well known among the early Hills residents.

He was a member of the Lead Masonic Blue lodge, and it was indicated today that the body may be brought here for burial, the services to be conducted by this lodge. The definite arrangements for the services could not be learned this afternoon.

Mr. Thompson was an employe [sic] of the Homestake Mining Company during his residence here. In the years before he entered the Battle Mountain sanitarium at Hot Springs, where death overtook him this morning, he made his home in Alzada, Mont.

DEADWOOD DAILY PIONEER TIMES – December 7, 1928

LEAD NEWS – (From The Call)

The body of Peter Thompson, veteran of the Indian wars under the command of General George Custer, who died in Hot Springs Tuesday at the Battle Mountain sanitarium, will arrive here today and funeral services will be held at 2 o'clock from the Lead Masonic temple. Burial will be made in the Masonic cemetery and members of the Golden Star lodge, of which Mr. Thompson has been a member since 1884, will conduct the rites. Well known and loved among the old timers of Lead and the northern Hills, Mr. Thompson made his home in Lead for many years prior to his removal to Alzada, Mont., and later to the sanitarium at Hot Springs. Mr. Thompson was born in County Fife,

Scotland, December 28, 1854***.

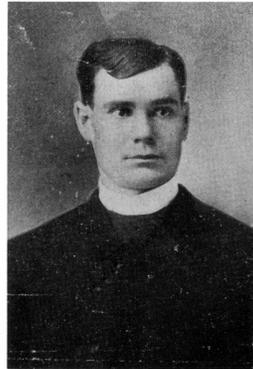
Lead Daily Call – December 7, 1928

FUNERAL RITES HELD HERE TODAY FOR PETER THOMPSON

Funeral services were held this afternoon from the Lead Masonic Temple at 2 o'clock for the late Peter Thompson, well-known old timer of this section and one of the last survivors of the Indian wars fought under the command of General George Custer.

Mr. Thompson died in the Battle Mountain sanitarium in Hot Springs, where he had made his home during the last few years.

The services were under the direction of the local Masonic Blue lodge of which he was a member for many years. Several relatives and representatives of the hot Springs Masonic lodge were here to attend the last rites. Burial was made in the Masonic cemetery.



Peter Thompson

* - Thompson himself never claimed to be a "last survivor". This was a moniker attached to him in order to sell newspapers. Charles Windolph, also from Lead, was the last surviving combatant from the Little Big Horn battle dying in 1950. Even Windolph was not THE last survivor. That distinction goes to the Lakota Dewey Beard who died in 1955.

** - Dates of death for Thompson vary. The date on his headstone is December 3, 1928. Other dates given are December 4th and 5th. Thompson researcher Rocky Boyd has cleared this up for me. According to Thompson's death certificate he died at 6:15 PM on December 3, 1928.

*** - His date of birth has also been listed as December 28, 1853. Thompson was actually born on September 1, 1853. December 28, 1853 was the date of his baptism. Again, thanks to Rocky Boyd for this information.