Berkeley Cal, December 15th.1928

W.S.Campbell.

#5 pl (1)

Dear Sir:

I was pleased to receive your letter of inquiry of 16th, ult,regarding Sitting Bull,for though in my eightieth year,I am always interested in persons interested in my old friend"The Indian." but three recently acquired broken ribs,and an attack of influenza has delayed my answering you.

I knew Sitting Bull, "Tatonka Iotaka," meeting him first in 1874 when I was an engineer on the exploration of the International Boundary, i,e,the 49° Parallel running from Lake of the Woods to the summit of the Rocky Mountains 860 miles. and the last time in 1882 after his surrender to Gen.Miles on the Yellowstone,six years after the Custer disaster.

I have often felt called upon to offset attempts made to disparage Sitting Bull as a Warrior, a patriot,and a great and able leader of his people.

He was of the Huncpapa band of the Northern Sioux,and was born on Grand River North Dakota, in 1834, his father being the subchief Sitting Bull or Four Horns,

His childhood name was Jumping Badger,and early developed good hunting ability, and at the age of 14 he accompanied his father on the war path against the Crows and killed his first enemy,and won the right to take his fathers name of Four Horns,and in 1857 took the name of Sitting Bull.

Thence on he came to the front,and took active part in the wars on the Plains of the '60's,and in 1866 led his people in a memorable assault against Ft.Buford,at the mouth of the Yellowstone on the Missouri.

He continued prominently on the war path against the Whites, Crows,and Shoshones,until 1876,when closing with the Battle of the Little Big Horn,and the Custer disaster June the 25th, the combined forces in the field under Generals Terry and Crook being to large for his hostile numbering 3.000 warrior he was forced to disband and take refuge with the bulk of his men,across the line in British America,his war chief and military leader Crazy Horse with his contingent scattering into the buffalo ranges of Montana for the coming Winter.

While Sitting Bull showed marked ability on the war path and hunt,his greatest value to his people was as an organizer and adviser,his brain ran toward mysticism,hence he became practically,a prophet,an augur,a soothsayer, if on "making medicine" going through his incantations,the "signs" indicated war,his advice was war, if peace,it was peace.

During the battle June 25th,he took no active part in the field,but consulted the spirits in his lodge, and Crazy Horse, Gall,and Crow King,led the 3.000 warriors in the battle.and the 7th,Cavalry was defeated.

The leaders however,including Sitting Bull, were aware of the fact,throug their scouts, that Crooks command numbering 1600 men to which I was attached as surgeon,had repaired damages after the Rosebud battle where Sitting Bull had jumped us on the 17th, would soon approach, and that Terry was advancing with a like number from the Northeast, so Sitting Bull announced that the "signs were not propitious" for continuing the campaign,so the dispersal took place as above.

Time passed,the buffalo hunters swarmed over their hunting grounds,their commissary the buffalo herds,were being rapidly scattered and destroyed,and in the Fall of 1882 the "Great Mother" (Queen Victoria) refusing to feed them, Sitting Bull was forced to surrender to Gen,Miles on the Yellostone.

They called Miles,Bear Coat,as he wore bear skin trimmings on his overcoat,and one can not but admire that old stalwart,reactionarys' remark as he surrendered that day, " Bear Coat,starvation has forced us to come in, we have had to eat up our dogs and horses, I give up,but the Great Spirit never made me to be an agency Indian,and feed out of the hand of the White Man".

One time he remarked to me, "Little Beard, they call the killing of Custer and his men a massacre, [wicaktapi], I suppose had we all been killed, it would not have been". how else could I answer, "No,Sitting Bull, we attacked you on your own hunting grounds,and you got the best of us."