

December 27, 1928.

Mr. A. B. Welch,
Postmaster,
Mandan, North Dakota.

Dear Mr. Welch:

Now that the Christmas rush is over I want to thank you for your kindness in sending me the copies of the contract made by Sitting Bull to leave the reservation in 1884. I suppose this is not the same as the one with Buffalo Bill as I understand Buffalo Bill paid Sitting Bull more than this man Allen seems to have done. I intend to trace Sitting Bull's movements through the East with the shows and to Washington and read up in the newspapers and magazines of those days to see what I can learn. It will help me a lot and save a great deal of trouble if I can learn from your records the dates when Sitting Bull left the reservation and returned to it and the names of the parties who were in charge of him as well as the names of other Indians in the party if they were given.

If you will let me have those records to study or copies of them I will return them promptly as I did before. I have told nobody that you possess these records and you need not worry about anyone's finding it out from me. I could not use copies of such records in my own work. All I want is the information. At the same time I want to see the record itself so that I will make no mistake and can honestly declare that my statements rest on a sure foundation.

I had expected to be up in your neighborhood during the Christmas holidays and planned to visit you at that time but the illness of my little girl prevented me from being away and so I was disappointed. If it is too much trouble to run through your records and pick out those which have to do with Sitting Bull, why not send a bunch of the records to me by express, collect? I can look them over and return them within a few days. Then you might send me some more, etc. without letting any great number out of your possession at one time and without any expense to you. Even though many of the records have nothing directly to do with Sitting Bull they will help clear up my ideas about how an Indian agency is run and perhaps give information of value on other points. If you will do this you may be sure that I will be prompt in returning the records and a box of cigars will be on me. I have been looking over your letters again and was much interested to know that about the fight when Sitting Bull was killed. You state that you have the guns used by the ghost dancers in this fight, as well as his own gun. This surprised me as I had supposed the Indians had been disarmed by the soldiers when they surrendered. What kind of weapons are they, anyway? I suppose they were not the best to be had in those days. Where do you suppose the Indians got them? Were the police armed with Winchesters or revolvers in that fight? The story of that fight as I heard it