September 19, 1929.

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

Dear Mr. Welch:

I have your letter of September 15 and am afraid I have not made myself clear. I assure you that what I was told about the Fast Horse tipi was a great disappoint to me. Nothing would please me better than to use those drawings which would add a great deal of color to my book. From what I know I judge that they truly represent important incidents in Sitting Bull's life and are certainly excellent examples of Indian pictography, but you have no idea how hard-boiled my publisher is in matters of authenticity. Practically every point of a biography submitted to him must be verified. You are entirely wrong if you think I do not value your information. If I did not I would not have written you so many letters or have visited you twice during my brief stay in your state.

As a matter of fact I happened upon the Fast Horse family quite by accident and having done so naturally widhed to see the tipi you had told me of. I was informed that I was not of buffalo hide but of cow hide and that it had been made only twenty years before. Others separately questioned said as much and I found no one to assert that the drawings were made by Sitting Bull himself. You will readily understand my predicament in such a case. My publisher would not accept the word of Jesus Christ himself unless verified by some other informant. Where authorities differ doubt naturally arises and my publisher is very unfriendly to doubtful material.

Your warnings with regard to Indian testimony evidence the soundness of your methods of historical reserach. I have worked with Indians for some twenty years past and I never accept any statement without verification by a separate informant through a different interpreter. I can see no reason why verification should not be applied equally to all information, wherever secured. You yourself I have no doubt are accustomed to such procedure.

I am not an historian but a literary man. My job is presentation, and all I desire is the truth to work with. I have no interest in the personal relations of historians or in their differences and I assure you most sincerely that my point of view in this matter is entirely impersonal. I am sorry that the tone of my letter should have suggested anything else. It was dictated in a hurry while I was suffering from a heavy attack of hay fever following a drive of fourteen hundred miles without stopping to sleep.

If I have been hasty I am sorry. I find that my secretary has neglected to mail the drawings and I shall be very happy to have them authenticated. Probably certificate of the State Historical Society would be most sarisfactory to my publisher in his present state of mind.