

July 1, 1929.

Major George P. Ahern, U.S.A.,  
c/ The Adjutant General,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

May I introduce myself and make a request?

I grew up in western Oklahoma among the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians, many of whom I know very well. In fact, my uncle adopted an Arapaho boy. Afterward I was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, and still later came to this University to teach. All these years my chief interest has been Western history and the Plains Indians. I have recently published a number of books on such topics, such as HAPPY HUNTING GROUNDS and KIT CARSON, the Happy Warrior of the Old West. I state these facts in order that you may know I am not a sensational journalist seeking copy, but- I trust- a serious historian. Perhaps I should add that, though known since boyhood by the name of my step-father Campbell, I prefer to publish under the name of my own father, Stanley Vestal.

I am now engaged on a life of Sitting Bull.

I am informed that you were well acquainted with Sitting Bull, and I know you are a friend to the Indian. May I ask that you give me your assistance? I have spent the past year searching the records and reading books on this subject, but I find much that requires verification. After all, only first-hand, impartial impressions will serve my turn.

I shall be very grateful if you will give me the benefit of your experience and tell me what you know of Sitting Bull, his deeds, words, and personal character. What he said to you, how he impressed you, and any other details which seem to you significant.

Incidentally, I think I can promise you that my book on Sitting Bull will do some good for the Indian now, by calling attention to the injustices done him in the past and in the present. For until now, no Indian has received biographic treatment on the same scale and with the same seriousness as would be given to a white leader of such fame. I intend to do Sitting Bull on that scale.

I shall, of course, be happy to give you full credit for the information you give me when the book is printed.

Faithfully yours,

W.S.Campbell  
(Formerly Captain, 335th F.A., A.E.F.)