

The Woodley,  
Washington, D. C.,  
July 12, 1929.

Captain W. S. Campbell,  
Department of English,  
University of Oklahoma,  
Norman, Oklahoma.

Dear Captain Campbell:

Your letter gave me a great deal of pleasure for two reasons; first, your interest in Sitting Bull; and, second, I believe you are the man to undertake a great service to the Indian children by writing for the grade pupils in Indian schools a brief history of famous Indian Chiefs. Tales of such really great men would thrill the Indian boys and girls, would make them proud of their Indian blood, and would inspire them to greater efforts in a world quite different from that enjoyed by his ancestors when free and untrammelled.

The Indian after such a long period of mistreatment and injustice, crowded to the wall, bewildered, helpless and hopeless, surely is in need of the inspiration such a work will give him. Such a book should cover every region of the country. In case you lack material the Bibliography Division of the Library of Congress should be able to give you all the material necessary. You may count on me for any assistance needed.

Now as to your request as to information concerning Sitting Bull. After graduating from West Point in June 1882, I joined my regiment in September of that year at Fort Randall, Dakota Territory. Sitting Bull and one hundred and fifty-four of his followers were held as prisoners in a camp just outside the fort. This band had fled to Canada in 1876, but returned to the United States in 1881, and were placed at Fort Randall.

Shortly after my arrival at this point, the Commanding Officer asked me if I could translate French and German letters received by Sitting Bull. He informed me that letters were being received not only from people in the United States, but from many foreign lands, which were prompted by accounts in illustrated journals. These letters included requests for his autograph, his tomahawk, pipe, etc. Only occasionally did he deem a reply necessary. He was unable to speak English, but someone taught him to write "Sitting Bull", and it was interesting to watch him go about this task. The dots over his i's were quite large, and the t's were crossed at the very top of the vertical mark.

Every morning after the ceremony of Guard Mount, the new Officer of the Day would proceed to the Indian camp and count the prisoners who usually sat in front of their tepees. It was quite a function preceded by careful toilet preparations by the women. It interested me to watch a mother apply a touch of color here and there to the face of her daughter and then draw back a little to get the general effect. The camp, like all Indian camps, was well administered by the Chief. Never was there any disturbance. The children were well behaved and apparently never needed disciplinary measures. This was due largely to the love of the children for their parents, and the profound respect paid the older members and leaders of the tribe.

I would visit the camp daily and spend quite a time with Sitting Bull, and very often he would come to my quarters for a return visit. This went on daily for several months until my Company was ordered to Minnesota.