

The artificiality of the pieces is evident on the basis of their literary quality; they are inconsequential, rhetorical, and without any inner light of sincerity." Just what the interpreter at Fort Walsh could have made of such a volume is hard to say, yet it may have been translated in toto, for the Royal Mounted then contained, among other recruits from England, a son of Charles Dickens, and other men of good education.

Other legends were current in the east, one -- most persistent, because most flattering -- that Sitting Bull was a graduate of West Point, and that he was a great student of the campaigns of Napoleon Bonaparte! Needless to say, the U. S. Military Academy has no record of any cadet of his name. Nor had Sitting Bull any opportunity to study Napoleon's tactics: he was too busy defeating men who had spent their lives at that. These wild rumors are but a few of that long caravan of camels which the American public swallowed whole in regard to Sitting Bull.

Sitting Bull spoke Sioux, Hohe, and had a smattering of the language of the Crows. He was master of the sign language, and therefore had no need to learn Plains Indian languages. He could understand, though he could not speak, the jargon of the French Canadians. But he never learned to use English, nor could he read. He learned to write his autograph: this was the extent of his writing. After he returned to the States he received many letters, which had to be read to him, and used to enjoy hearing newspapers read to him, translated into his native tongue. Also, he sometimes listened while a friend read to him from the Bible. It was one of his keenest regrets that he could not read and write, for he knew it gave the whites a tremendous advantage over him in their civilisation of written laws and treaties and contracts. But he was too old; he had no chance, and no time for it.