

Nov. 2, 1929.

Colonel W. H. C. Bowen,  
1020 Fairview Blvd.  
Portland, Ore.

Dear Colonel Bowen,

I am extremely grateful to you for your kind letter of October 28. What you tell me will be of great assistance. It is just such first-hand information that is of value to the historian and as you are aware the history of the west requires a great deal of sifting. The history of the Civil War must be studied from the records of both sides and the same is true of Indian warfare.

Thanks for your impressions of the Indian as a fighter. The general opinion of Sitting Bull's rating as a warrior is largely erroneous from what I can gather. It is true that in some of the major fights with white men he took no part. However, his band had no wars with the white men until he was more than thirty years old and by that time he had already become a leader by reason of his exploits against other Indian tribes. Historians generally overlook the fact that Indian wars were continuous and in Indian opinion vastly more important than the occasional wars with the white men. This point of view prevented them from combining and resisting white conquests. By the time Miles began his campaign on the plains, Sitting Bull was already middle aged and the acknowledged leader of the non-treaty Sioux. All the old Indians agree that he was one of the bravest men they ever had and the white men who knew him best declare that McLaughlin's book is a falsehood insofar as his estimate of Sitting Bull is concerned. If the other Indians had been able to foresee the danger of white immigration as they did, there would have been no reason to complain of lack of fighting on the frontier.

Thanks for your kind offer of Byrne's book. As it happens I have a copy. I assure you I greatly appreciate your kind assistance.

Yours faithfully,

W. S. Campbell.