

Louisville, Ky. Nov. 22, 1928

Deer Park Ave. 1970

Dear Campbell:

In response to yours of Nov. 17 I am sending to you today
by registered mail a large envelope containing:

1. Two leaves from my Pine Ridge album (1909)
-- light gray paper - showing the circular
booth constructed of saplings and pine branches
with the "sacred tree" in the center (cottonwood)
from which the Star Spangled Banner is waving.
The occasion was the annual "Giving-Away" ceremony
which is the modern survival of the old sundance
At least the tortures of which were forbidden by
the government in 1883.
The postmaster at Pine Ridge, a veteran of the
Indian wars, told me that at one of the last cele-
brations of the real sundance on that reservation
a soldier from Ft. Lincoln, Nebraska, made a series
of very fine photographs of the sundance. I could
never find out what became of them.
The only photograph of the sundance torture I have
ever seen is that reproduced in the number of the
2. "Living Races" I send along on page 531 after a
photo by Rau in Philadelphia who is still selling
prints of this and many other Indian views which
were taken about 1869.
That photo probably represents the Blackfoot cere-
mony. The shield on the man's back is probably attach-
ed to skewers passing through the muscles of his
back. You can see the blood streaming down his legs.
On his head is a wreath of sage which I also saw in
use at the great Blackfoot festival of the "Medicine
3. Lodge" in 1915 (see the dark gray leaf).
One of these views shows one of the four groups of
men with long poles approaching from one of the four
regions (with frequent stops during which they sing
ceremonial songs). When they met at the sacred center
pole or tree they hoisted the "Rafters" of the lodge
into place (see photo). The lower view shows the
"Medicine Lodge" completed, with the sacrifices, most-
ly long streamers of cloth, suspended from the ends of
the "rafters". There is also visible, near the top of
the lodge, a bundle of brush or branches which was ex-
plained to a friend of mine as "the nest of the thun-
der bird" The ceremony of the "medicine Lodge" consis-
ted mostly of prayers (apparently to the sun) by a
medicine man who showed signs of long fasting.
Detailed information of the Sioux sundance is contained
in the volume of the B. A. E. entitled "A Study of
Siouan Cults" (or something to that effect).