

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

April 22, 1957

Dr. W. S. Campbell
School of Journalism
The University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Campbell:

I'm very glad to know that your Sitting Bull book is out in a new edition by the University of Oklahoma Press. I'm sure it will continue to be popular. I've heard a number of people speak of your The Man Who Killed Custer article in American Heritage. It has been widely read. I have not read it as yet. But I certainly shall do so.

As for your church museum project the concept of a museum as "a collection of labels illustrated by specimens" was first expressed by G. Brown Goode of this museum more than a half century ago. We in the larger museums have to be careful that the labels don't dominate the specimens. One of our toughest jobs is keeping them short and to the point. It's my opinion that in a small museum labels are not so much of a problem. People have time to read them all. Nevertheless, brevity as well as pointedness and interest are important.

If possible, it's well to arrange a historical museum like chapters in a book, beginning with the earliest period and following through chronologically to the end. That makes for easy visitor comprehension.

Equipment is always a problem for the museum with little money. Don't buy cases for objects that don't need them. Pictures, charts and other flat work can be mounted on plywood panels attached to walls outside cases. Cases are needed to protect valuable articles from theft, dust and insect pests. I don't imagine theft will be much of a problem in your case, but insects may. In a museum case you usually get what you pay for. Wooden ones can be made less expensively than metal framed ones but usually are not as good. Both Remington Rand and Michaels Art Bronze (Cincinnati) make fine metal frame cases. They are very expensive but many museums consider them the best buy in the long run.