

Chauncey Thomas
12-30-28

Dear Mr. Campbell--

Twice I have given a lecture "Fossilized Fiction Called History" much to the sincere scandal of sundry inborn hero worshippers. For over half a life time I have been trying to find out just what History is, and so far with poor success. Perhaps it is like Matter, Energy, and Beauty, we know in a vague sort of way but cannot tell it in words.

All of which has to do somewhat with the enclosed. ^{It is} It is laced with errors, yet contains considerable data. Some I can comb out, some I cannot. Incidentally, the more definite and positive a historian is the more suspicious I am of his writings. The enclosed page from today's Denver Sunday News is apparently done by one who would belittle Cody, which of course is as bad in its way as those who would over boom him, like Lincoln and Washington and various other national idols are greatly over done.

Cody himself told me that last day, I well recall, that "Wild Bill" got his name when the two of them--Cody and Hickok--were working as young men in the same wagon train. There were three "Bills" in the outfit, altho Hickok's first name was "Jim", and he got the humorous nickname --accord to what Cody told me--"Wild Bill" because when he was night guard over the horses he used to shoot at everything he was suspicious of--even a shadow-- and thus somewhat annoy the rest of the sleeping outfit. This clipping seems to indicate that the two men did not meet till after the war, yet I understand that they knew each other, actually met as I recall, in the army. As I recall the family account, Cody met the later Mrs. Cody thro Hickok in St. Louis, right after the war.

Today there has arisen a dispute whether or not Codu scalped Yellow Hand. There is a scalp hanging right now in Pahaska Teepee, from the Cody family, said to be that of Yellow Hand. I myself read a letter from Cody, written to his sister Julia soon after the incident, in which he