

1840 California St.,
Washington, D. C.,
May 23, 1929. *W.J.*

My dear Professor Campbell:

I wish I could send you a copy of my brief sketch of Sitting Bull. But the editor-in-chief made a ruling some time ago against the circulation of copies of articles by contributors; and though I am no longer on the staff of the Dictionary, I do not feel justified in disobeying the injunction.

The bibliography I attached to the sketch was the following: Unsigned sketch in the Handbook of American Indians; The Conquest of the Missouri, by Joseph Mills Hanson; Life of Sitting Bull, by W. Fletcher Johnson, and My Friend the Indian, by James McLaughlin (an exceptionally trustworthy writer). In the great volume of articles and books on Sitting Bull these were the only citations I cared to make. Much that has been written about him is sheer fiction -- and this is particularly true of what was written back in the 70's and 80's. He was asserted to be a white man, a graduate of West Point, Notre Dame and other institutions, a poet, scholar and philosopher. In 1878 some "nut" published a book entitled The Works of Sitting Bull. The savage was, of course, wholly illiterate except for the ability -- taught him during his exile in Canada -- to write his name.

As to persons likely to be met in the Dakotas who could probably give you some authentic information, I should put Joseph Mills Hanson, of Yankton, at the head. I have not met nor corresponded with Mr. Hanson, but I have a great admiration for his The Conquest of the Missouri. If there is any person in that region who really knows anything about Sitting Bull Mr. Hanson can probably tell you who he is. As for Indian testimony, I do not hold it in high regard. Dr. Charles A. Eastman, the "educated Sioux," might help you some. But I find him often wrong and sometimes fantastic in his statements.

Mr. Nelson A. Mason, secretary to Senator Lynn J. Frazier, is a good authority as to Dakota persons who know things. But I learn over the telephone that he is out of town and may not be back for a week or two. So I cannot at present help you from that quarter.

I am very sorry that I cannot do more. When Mr. Mason returns I shall ask him to give me some names.

It is of course a pleasure to know that you like my Road to Oregon, and I thank you for your commendation.

Sincerely yours,

W. J. Ghent.
W. J. GHENT.