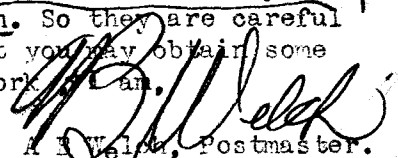


Mr 17/28

and their stories did not differ from what they told me years ago. The old log house is gone now. The Sioux call the fight, "The Battle in the Dark." The six policemen killed are buried in the Catholic grave yard at Ft. Yates, this state, but Father Bernard would not bury S.B. there because he was a "self confessed murderer" and he was buried in the north#### east corner of the Post Cemetery there, a quarter of a mile away from the Catholic yard. The bodies of all the soldiers are taken up and buried elsewhere now, and his grave only, remains there. For years it had a simple thick board with "Sitting Bull, Indian," burned into it with a hot iron, but the people carried those away as fast as they were erected, and so this summer, a cement slab was placed over it - which spoils it from my view point. Within ten feet of the grave is the edge of a government alfalfa field now, and a graded road runs on the other side within a block distance. He was buried in quick lime and any one who claims to be in possession of his head or any bones or hair, is just simply wrong about it. I have his old chamber loading six shooter and scabbard or holster, and all the rifles which were gathered from the battle field. I have them all identified and know who carried them. I also have part of his medicine - a buckskin bag with a small white stone and many long hairs, each rolled into a little ball. Another bag from the string of holy medicine, contains some rotten wood and another a petrified shell. Also, I have the shirt he wore in the ghost dances, although he was naked when killed - for Indians sleep "in the raw", and he was asleep when the Police broke into the house and struck a match to locate him, blowing it out instantly and seizing him before he could get a knife. He could have been taken captive had he preferred but he called out to fight, rather "kill", and the man on his right was killed, but shot him through the body before he fell. At the same time Red Tomahawk on his left, shot him through the heart and as he fell, he shot him through the head. The first man mentioned was Bull Head or Afraid of the Bear, a Lieut, of Police, and in charge. Tomahawk was a Sergeant, and still lives and I danced with him last Monday. He was married two times, to sisters, sisters of Grey Eagle, and his son, Crow Foot, was killed at the same instant that he was. He has no immediate relatives now, though I have kept track lately and have a list of some thirty or more, who claim relationship, mostly educated Indians who are hunting for publicity through being relatives of S.B. After the soldiers came into camp, a soldier picked up a neckyoke and pounded S.B. head with it until restrained by the Indian Police. My "maps" of the fight all show this neckyoke across his head. It has so often been claimed that he was a Chief and the leader of the Sioux at the battle at the L.B.Horn, that I have paid much attention to his history. He did NOT kill Custer, and did not fire a single shot in the fight. A greatly overestimated warrior and Indian leader. His was not even the strategy used in any fight of which I have any stories, even intertribal wars with the Crows, Hidatsa, Arikara or Mandans. I do not know that any item of this letter is fresh as you suggest, but I do have many articles regarding him, which are, for I have maintained a written account of stories, history, traditions, etc, of the Sioux for over 17 years. Have not published any volumes, for have not the money to do so, but have material for many. Indian material, for I have a peculiar entre to the Indian and his camp friendship, speaking the language and knowing the people, their customs, ceremonies and histories, and frequently correct some story which some old fellow is telling to me as the truth. So they are careful to be correct when talking with me. Trusting that you may obtain some views which will be of assistance to you in your work.

no KB - confident?



M. W. Watake, Postmaster.

Sincerely,

(Whose Sioux name is Mato Watakepe. Charging Bear.)