

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

The University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

December 1, 1928.

Dear Mr. Welch:

I want to thank you for letting me see the records from your book, which I am returning with this letter. They were very interesting.

I only wish I knew Sioux as you do, so that I could read the Sioux letter. I have made a copy, which I enclose herewith. Will you be good enough to correct any errors I have made and give me a literal translation between the lines? You may be sure I shall respect your wishes and not publish the records you have shown me.

I wish I had those photographs ready to send you, but the people in Washington are slow to work, and it may be some time before I can get the copies. When I do, I will let you know. I mean Sp's coups.

These drawings of his only cover his exploits up to 1870. No doubt you know of later fights he took part in- with Indians or whites. If you can tell me anything about them I will be grateful.

I am especially anxious to know something of Sitting Bull's visits to the east. He was with Buffalo Bill in 1885, and afterward was carried east to Philadelphia and elsewhere by some showman. Standing Bear tells of seeing him there in his book MY PEOPLE THE SIOUX, published by the Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1928. I suppose you have the records showing when he left and returned to the Reservation. Would you let me see them as you have the others? I agree not to publish them.

I am told that Sitting Bull had a vision at the Sun Dance on Tongue River in 1875, and prophesied that his enemies would be delivered into his hands. This prophecy came true when Custer fell. Have you heard the story of this vision and prophecy- or how he got the vision? Did he undergo torture in the dance at that time? Do you know whether his body showed the scars of Sun Dance torture?

Your collection of relics and your records ought to bring something, if sold to a big museum or historical collection. If you don't wish to sell them now, perhaps you might arrange for a sale when your will is proved. And certainly the State historical Society ought to be glad to print your story and your records. I have been interested in Indians a long time, and I have found that almost any other kind of story sells better than an Indian story now. Even the Western magazines will hardly ever buy one. I got one back this morning. But curios and records have a market value. I had a ghost shirt I sold for twenty five dollars in 1914, and now they refuse three hundred for it! Writing about Indians costs more than it comes to, and although I know half a dozen authors who have tried it, I have yet to hear one of them admit a profit. I do it now because it helps me along in my profession here. This State is full of Indians, many of them rich and influential. I don't want to discourage you from writing, for I think it would be a pity if your material was not printed.