

United States Post Office

CLASS

MANDAN, NORTH DAKOTA

Dec 10th, 1928.

Dear Mr. Campbell :

I am sending you a few extracts from long reports and a long exhibition contract, which I trust will be of interest to you.

About S.B.'s visions. This vision of "his enemies being delivered into his hands" sounds strangely "whitemanized". I would not believe it unless some Indian I knew to be truthful, told me that the prophecy had been actually given to the people in 1875, and not after the fight. I have never heard of that. Many things have been written re this old influential medicine man - since his death in Dec 1890. Most of it is not true. Some of the stories just barely touch along the edges of the garment of truth, but indicate that, while some writer has heard hints of certain things, he has not carried on a sufficiently close investigation as to the actual facts, and has woven into the stories, too much of what writers proudly call "imagination." This quality has no good place when endeavoring to write a biography or history. He DID go into so-called trances. At such times, I have no doubt that he was unconscious, for I know men who have tested him with hot coals at such times. What his brain worked up then, I have no idea, beyond them saying that "he talked with tongues of people, long dead." And "came back" with messages from relatives of people about him, to them. In other words, S.B. was a natural "spiritualist" and no doubt, his actions when under this influence, were strange and "his medicine was wonderful." Besides all that - he was crafty, cunning and extremely analytical. A great reader of character and a student of "reaction."

I have it from those who should know among the old Indians that he never took the Sun Dance ordeals in any manner. I shall have to believe that statement. Just last month, Whirling Hawk (one of his Lieutenants or headmen) told me that he did not take the dance. No-Two-Horns, another of his closest headmen, has told me the same thing several times. I believe both of these old men. No Two Horns is dead now. He could well have had a vision at the Sun Dance and yet, have taken no part as a partisan, in the actual dancing. His ghost shirt in my collection, is a thick blue army shirt, decorated with beads on the back and front. I do not believe that these decorations have any "wakan" (mysterious) meaning, but are simply decorative efforts. Your shirt with a Crow, cedar tree and buffalo - strongly indicate that it might be an Arikara garment. The Crow might be a Thunder Bird, and their tree is "grandmother Cedar". The Buffalo might be on any plains Indian shirt. However, it might be just what you think it is, a ghost shirt. They made shirts of flour sacks if they could not get buckskin. - There are no feathers on the shirt I have. S.B. never wore more than one. (over)

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