

January 2, 1953

Mr. Kenneth W. Porter  
28 Gorham Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Porter:

I was happy to get your letter praising my book *Sitting Bull* in such high terms. I assure you that nothing gives me more pleasure than the praise of those who know the West and appreciate what I am trying to do. In this case it is especially delightful since we are both Jayhawkers.

I shall be happy to do all I can in helping you answer the problems you raise. I am afraid I know little more of Isaiah, the Negro scout, than appears in my book. He was called Teat by the Indians, because the Sioux word for teat resembles Isaiah in sound. I fancy you might learn something from Mr. L. N. Crawford, formerly State Historian of North Dakota and now proprietor of the Crawford Book Shop, Fargo, North Dakota. He tells a story of Isaiah and *Sitting Bull* in his book *Rekindling Campfires*. You might also apply to Mr. Frank Zahn, Fort Yates, North Dakota, who knows or can readily find out what you wish to know. He is writing a book of his own but is generally generous with his information. He is by profession an interpreter, and his mother is an Indian woman. Should you wish him to do much research, I suppose a few dollars might help. You may use my name in writing him if you wish.

I believe somewhere in the Kansas Historical Collections, Grinnell explains the origin of the name Black-White-Man for one of the Cheyennes. It appears to have been taken from a Negro owned by one of the Bent brothers, if my memory has not failed me. No doubt Grinnell himself could refer you to the passage. I know members of that family in Oklahoma or did know them some years ago, but doubt whether they could help you in answering the question you raise. So far as I know the Cheyennes and Sioux seldom intermarried with Negroes. I know of one Arapaho family here which did.

I personally do not believe that Frank Grouard was a mulatto but I introduced the note in order to play fair. Since the book went to press, T. J. Gatchell of Buffalo, Wyoming, who knew both Grouard and his father, has assured me that he was not of Negro blood. A letter to him would probably clear this up. He is a very good historian, though he has published little.