

August 14, 1929.

Colonel Charles Francis Bates,
Milburn Block, Bronxville, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

Thanks very much for your kind letter of August 6th. I have found it very helpful. What you say of Crazy Horse and Gall seems very right to me, and your suggestion as to the title gives me something to think about. Of course I intend to include these other men, and have already made some study of them with that in mind. I think Gall was a typical man of action with tremendous vitality in action, a born leader- as you say- but by no means the genius in a military way that Crazy Horse was. It is too bad that Crazy Horse was killed so early, before anyone could get his story.

That reminds me. Do you know any book that treats of the development of Indian tactics and strategy in war with the whites? It is clear to me that they adopted many of our methods of war, and certainly changed their old skulking tactics remarkably in the later years. I find very little on this point anywhere- not even in Byrne's SOLDIERS OF THE PLAINS.

Sitting Bull was not a coward, as you rightly say. None of those who knew him well personally held him in disrepute. He could not have swayed the Sioux, if he had been a coward. He was a thinker and an organizer, and the only one who never yielded at heart, and never stopped fighting for his people. I don't know where one can find so tenacious and persistent an Indian. I have known a great many- chiefly Cheyennes and Arapahoes- but they all seem to drift a good deal. Sitting Bull seems never to have let go. No doubt that was part of the secret of his power over other men.

What you say of Girard is just what I wanted. I wonder if he is yet alive- or someone who knew him? Would he be listed at the Pension Bureau? Thanks also for your comments on Dixon.

I shall try to get in touch with Lieut-Col. Partello. Thanks for that, too.

You are certainly right about McLaughlin. The fact is, he was white-washing himself in that book. I have already found a ~~DOZEN~~ DOZEN flaws in that little story. No doubt he felt some defense was needed, seeing that so many regarded him- and still regard him- as little better than the murderer of Sitting Bull.

I have so much ground to cover on the ethnological side that as yet I have not gone very deeply into the military side of the story. It occurs to me that you may have a considerable bibliography already listed on the Custer disaster and other Indian fights. If so, would you be kind enough to send me a transcript? I am especially anxious not to miss ~~any~~ any of the various Indian accounts of the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

I look forward to seeing your life of Custer with great pleasure. I have read all the existing accounts, I think. But it is clear that only a military man can do the job rightly, and by all I can learn you are that man.

Best wishes,

W.S.CAMPBELL