

OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(TRUSTEE OF THE STATE)

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

December 12, 1928.

Dear Captain Campbell:-

Yours of the 10th instant received. Have had no reply to my letter as yet; in fact, rather doubt if one will be essayed, even though the editor must realize that he has been stung. Possibly he may regard my comments as those of a "buttinsky," even though it was none of my business, personally, it was plainly the patriotic duty of some one to register a righteously indignant protest.

I regret that I cannot aid you, directly, in your quest for data concerning Sitting Bull. I never was far enough north to see him. I imagine that there are many people still living who could give you more or less first-hand information but I do not happen to know them. I once had an opportunity to have gained considerable information concerning Tatanⁿka Yotanⁿka but let it slip without realizing what it might have meant. Thirty years ago, at Denver, I frequently met, on rather familiar terms, an old man who was a member of one of the old Creole French families of Canadian-Missouri stock, with visible trace of Indian ancestry also, born at Florissant (between St. Louis and St. Charles), in 1834. When he was sixteen (in 1850), his parents permitted him to go on the American Fur Company's steamboat up the river to Fort Benton. The boat struck low water at the mouth of the Yellowstone, so had to send to the post for keelboats and barges to which the cargo was transferred. While this was in progress, our friend (Charles F. Christy) got ashore and hid in the brush, so that, when the steamer was ready to start on its downstream voyage, the Captain (who was personally responsible for the young man's safe return) could not find him and had to set out without him. Young Christy stayed in the upper Missouri River country for two years before returning for a visit to his home and friends. He soon found his way back up the river again and he remained there, as a hunter and trapper, most of the time for eight years. He and Sitting Bull (whom he always called by his Sioux name) were just of the same age and were great friends during their later youth and young manhood. In those days, I did not dream that I would ever be mixed up with gathering and recording western history, so I made no efforts at inducing the old man to tell all that he knew, much less to make notes on it. Like other old timers, he was sometimes inclined to "draw the long bow," but I do not think he did so with me for, even then, he knew that my interest in such matters was too critical to stand for much if any misrepresentation. In 1858, he came down to the upper Platte and upper Arkansas regions and, thereafter, was in western Kansas and eastern Colorado for five years--knew Jim Bridger, Kit Carson, Bill Bent, Albert G. Boone, Cody, Ed Guerrier, Ceran St. Vrain, Lucien B. Maxwell and nearly every one else who was worth knowing in those days. During the latter part of the Civil War, he was in the Union Army, having enlisted under an assumed name (Charles F. Hickman) because his whole kith and kin in Missouri were secessionist in their sympathies and affiliations. So, when I knew him, in 1897-8, he was having difficulty to persuade or convince the Pension Bureau that Charles F. Hickman and Charles F. Christy were one and the same man. During

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