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Louisville, Ky. Oct 30, 1928

Deer Park Ave. 1970

Dear Campbell:

In answer to your letter of Oct. 22 inquiring about the sacrifice of fingers by the Sioux, I can only say that I have never come across that particular kind of blood sacrifice.

The only kind of blood sacrifice of which I found traces in the accounts and scars on the bodies of old Indian informants was the torture in the old sundance in which the devotees were suspended by rawhide ropes from the sacred tree in the center of the camping circle, the other end of the rope passing around skewers stuck through the muscles of the chest and the back. I never saw an Indian who had sacrificed a finger in the way you describe and doubt that it was done in historic times among the Sioux, as Catlin describes the custom among the Mandans.

You are, of course, informed of the custom among the Cheyennes of cutting off fingers of enemies as a trophy. There is a necklace made of human fingers in the National Museum in Washington, taken, I think, by Custer's soldiers in a Cheyenne camp.

As to Red Cloud and a more detailed history of his life, I was told that an investigator for the Historical Society of Nebraska had been at Pine Ridge several years before me (i. e. before 1909) and gathered material concerning Red Cloud's life which had been published in the proceedings of that Society, but I never saw a copy of the publication. Perhaps that might give you a clue for further information.

Yours, as always,

Frederick Weygold