

Louisville, Ky. Nov. 22, 1928

~~H. L.~~ Deer Park Ave. 1970

Dear Campbell:

In response to yours of Nov. 17 I am sending to you today by registered mail a large envelope containing:

1. Two leaves from my Pine Ridge album (1909)
-- light gray paper - showing the circular booth constructed of saplings and pine branches with the "sacred tree" in the center (cottonwood) from which the Star Spangled Banner is waving. The occasion was the annual "Giving-Away" ceremony which is the modern survival of the old sundance. At least the tortures of which were forbidden by the government in 1883.
The postmaster at Pine Ridge, a veteran of the Indian wars, told me that at one of the last celebrations of the real sundance on that reservation a soldier from Ft. Lincoln, Nebraska, made a series of very fine photographs of the sundance. I could never find out what became of them.
The only photograph of the sundance torture I have ever seen is that reproduced in the number of the
2. "Living Races" I send along on page 531 after a photo by Rau in Philadelphia who is still selling prints of this and many other Indian views which were taken about 1869.)
That photo probably represents the Blackfoot ceremony. The shield on the man's back is probably attached to skewers passing through the muscles of his back. You can see the blood streaming down his legs. On his head is a wreath of sage which I also saw in use at the great Blackfoot festival of the "Medicine Lodge" in 1915 (see the dark gray leaf).
3. Lodge" in 1915 (see the dark gray leaf).
One of these views shows one of the four groups of men with long poles approaching from one of the four regions (with frequent stops during which they sing ceremonial songs). When they met at the sacred center pole or tree they hoisted the "Rafters" of the lodge into place (see photo). The lower view shows the "Medicine Lodge" completed, with the sacrifices, mostly long streamers of cloth, suspended from the ends of the "rafters". There is also visible, near the top of the lodge, a bundle of brush or branches which was explained to a friend of mine as "the nest of the thunder bird" The ceremony of the "medicine Lodge" consisted mostly of prayers (apparently to the sun) by a medicine man who showed signs of long fasting.
Detailed information of the Sioux sundance is contained in the volume of the B. A. E. entitled "A Study of Siouan cults" (or something to that effect).