Finding Aid to the Sitting Bull and Oglala Sioux Collection MS.752

Finding aid prepared by Holly Rose Larson
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2012 November 26
**Title:** Sitting Bull and Oglala Sioux Collection

**Identifier/Call Number:** MS.752

**Contributing Institution:** Autry National Center, Braun Research Library

**Language of Material:** English

**Physical Description:** 0.1 linear feet (1 folder)

**Date:** 1881, undated

**Abstract:** This collection contains an autograph and drawing of a bull made by Sitting Bull on June 16, 1881, and a collection of seven typed manuscripts of articles about Sitting Bull and the Oglala Sioux, as well as a hand-written copy of correspondence between the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and the United States Indian Agent at Standing Rock Agency between June 3, 1891 and June 14, 1894. The typed manuscripts appear to be newspaper articles, and all are undated.

**creator:** Freeman, C. Marjorie

**creator:** Hodge, Frederick Webb, 1864-1956

**creator:** Sitting Bull, 1834?-1890

**Scope and Contents**
This collection contains two discrete donations of archival materials. The first is an autograph and drawing of a bull made by Sitting Bull on June 16, 1881, which is signed by three witnesses: Edgar Bray, Thomas Drummond, and W. F. Freeman. The card contains a note that it was signed at Su'appelle, Northwest Territory. One of the witnesses, W. F. Freeman, is the father of the donor, C. Marjorie Freeman. The autograph is accompanied by an explanatory letter to Museum Director Frederick Webb Hodge from C. Marjorie Freeman, dated September 19, 1950. The other donation group in this collection contains seven typed manuscripts of articles about Sitting Bull and the Oglala Sioux, as well as a hand-written copy of correspondence between the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and the United States Indian Agent at Standing Rock Agency between June 3, 1891 and June 14, 1894. The titles of the typed manuscripts are "Sitting Bull: The Arrest and Death of the Great Sioux Medicine Man," "The Sioux In War and On The March," "Rain-In-The-Face: The Uncapapa Sioux Chief, a sketch of his career from 1870 to 1894," "The Ghost Dancers," "Camp Life of the Sioux: Costumes, Sports, Marriage Ceremonies, Councils, Treatment of the Sick, Sweat Houses and Mode of Burial," "The Origin and Progress: The Sioux, Past and Present, Government and Life," and "The Sun or Torture Dance: The Prohibited Test of Bravery Among the Sioux Indians." The typed manuscripts appear to be newspaper articles, and all are undated.

**Preferred citation**
*Sitting Bull and Oglala Sioux Collection*, 1881, undated, Braun Research Library Collection, Autry National Center, Los Angeles; MS.752.

**Processing history**
Processed by Library staff before 1981. Finding aid completed by Holly Rose Larson, NHPRC Processing Archivist, 2012 November 26, made possible through grant funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commissions (NHPRC).

**Acquisition**
Donation from C. Marjorie Freeman, 1952 May 7; and purchase from Charles Hamilton Autographs, 1959 October.

**Use**
Copyright has not been assigned to the Autry National Center. All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Autry Archivist. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the Autry National Center as the custodian of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained by the reader.

**Access**
Collection is open for research. Appointments to view materials are required. To make an appointment please visit http://theautry.org/research/research-rules-and-application or contact library staff at rroom@theautry.org.

**Biographical note**
Sitting Bull (Lakota; c. 1831 – December 15, 1890) was a Hunkpapa Lakota Sioux holy man who led his people as a tribal chief during years of resistance to United States government policies. He was killed by Indian agency police on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation during an attempt to arrest him at a time when authorities feared that he would join the Ghost Dance movement.

During the period 1868–1876, Sitting Bull developed into the most important of Native American chiefs. After the Treaty of Fort Laramie (1868) and the creation of the Great Sioux Reservation, many traditional Sioux warriors, such as Red Cloud of the Oglala and Spotted Tail of the Brulé, moved to reside permanently on the reservations. They were largely dependent
for subsistence on the US Indian agencies. Many other chiefs, including members of Sitting Bull's Hunkpapa band such as Gall, at times lived temporarily at the agencies. In 1875, the Northern Cheyenne, Hunkpapa, Oglala, Sans Arc, and Minneconjou camped together for a Sun Dance, with both the Cheyenne medicine man White Bull or Ice and Sitting Bull in association.

Sitting Bull's refusal to adopt any dependence on the white man meant that at times he and his small band of warriors lived isolated on the Plains. When Native Americans were threatened by the United States, numerous members from various Sioux bands and other tribes, such as the North Cheyenne, came to Sitting Bull's camp. His reputation for "strong medicine" developed as he continued to evade the European Americans. Over the course of the first half of 1876, Sitting Bull's camp continually expanded, as natives joined him for safety in numbers. His leadership had attracted the warriors and families of an extensive village, estimated at more than 10,000 people. Lt. Col. Custer came across this large camp on June 25, 1876. Sitting Bull did not take a direct military role in the ensuing battle; instead he acted as a spiritual chief and had performed the Sun Dance, in which he fasted and sacrificed over 100 pieces of flesh from his arms, a week prior to the attack.

In May 1877 led his band across the border into Saskatchewan, Canada. He remained in exile for four years near Wood Mountain, refusing a pardon and the chance to return.[25] When crossing the border into Saskatchewan, Sitting Bull was met by the Canadian Mounties of the region. Hunger and desperation eventually forced Sitting Bull, and 186 of his family and followers to return to the United States and surrender on July 19, 1881.

In 1885, Sitting Bull was allowed to leave the reservation to go Wild Westing with Buffalo Bill Cody's Buffalo Bill's Wild West. He earned about $50 a week for riding once around the arena, where he was a popular attraction. Sitting Bull returned to the Standing Rock Agency after four months with the Wild West Show. In 1890, James McLaughlin, the U.S. Indian Agent at Fort Yates on Standing Rock Agency, feared that the Lakota leader was about to flee the reservation with the Ghost Dancers, so he ordered the police to arrest Sitting Bull. This resulted in his death, on December 15, 1890.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
Articles
Artwork
Autographs
*Camp Life of the Sioux: Costumes, Sports, Marriage Ceremonies, Councils, Treatment of the Sick, Sweat Houses and Mode of Burial*
Dakota Indians
Ghost Dance
Indians of North America
North Dakota
Oglala Sioux Tribe of the Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota
*Rain-In-The-Face: The Uncapapa Sioux Chief, a sketch of his career from 1870 to 1894 Sitting Bull: The Arrest and Death of the Great Sioux Medicine Man*
South Dakota
*The Ghost Dancers The Origin and Progress: The Sioux, Past and Present, Government and Life The Sioux In War and On The March The Sun or Torture Dance: The Prohibited Test of Bravery Among the Sioux Indians*