

Siberts

C-6

November 26, 1940

*Indian
Military
Campaigns*

Mr. Bruce Siberts
R. R. No. 2, Box 325
Henryetta, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Siberts:

What you tell me of your experience is interesting, and I am sure would make interesting reading if properly presented by an experienced writer. It would have to be presented as fiction to have any chance of being filmed. The studios no longer buy historical non-fiction as a rule.

I know the country you speak of, and have written a life of Sitting Bull, as well as a couple of other books on the Sioux Indians, but I am tied up with contracts that will keep me busy for the year ahead. In any case, I never collaborate. I suspect you will find some difficulty in getting a good collaborator. Putting a story in shape for the press is 90% of the work, and nobody who can write well enough for the SATURDAY EVENING POST is likely to do 90% of the work for 50% of the profits unless the editor has ordered the work. Even then, there is very little in it for the writer.

Historical stuff is hard to sell to magazines unless it is written by an expert.

If you are not accustomed to writing by publication, a good method of getting material on paper would be to call in some good listener two or three nights a week and tell your experiences to him just as they come into your mind, while a good stenographer sits behind you and takes down everything you say. This keeps a man from being self conscious as he is likely to be when writing with a pen, unless he is expert in that kind of work. Once you have all that first hand material on paper, it will be easier to interest a collaborator and an editor. If you use this method, just go ahead and be natural, telling whatever you wish to say. It can all be arranged and fixed up later.

Under separate cover I am sending you a circular about my course in Professional Writing.

One of my pupils, Mr. Bill Gulick, is probably qualified to collaborate with you. His address is: Route 3, Box 503,