

John Jones  
Box 1171  
Hollywood 28, Calif.

June 19, 1957

Dear Mr. Vestal:

Your recent extension on your life of Sitting Bull shows so much knowledge of Indians that it may be you can solve a puzzle for me.

Though I could speak the sign language in my youth and though I have had many bows made for me, I can never remember for certain seeing an old Indian use one.

Early drawings of Indians in the 1600s invariably show the archer holding the bow in his right hand and the arrow against his side. Evidently he thrust with the bow instead of pulling on the string after the manner of the English archer.

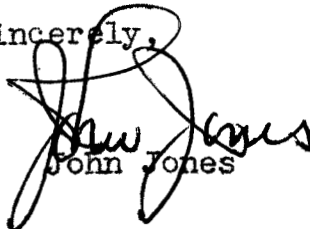
It seems to me that I remember old-timers telling me this in the days of my youth -- white men, I mean, and they said this was why the western sixshooter man shoved his gun forward after he had brought it down. The movements were almost one.

My father, a Texas Ranger of the 1870s, used a different technique, holding the pistol about the center of his body and firing with both eyes open.

It also seems I remember some one saying that the Sioux put a thumb and forefinger on the string, above and below the arrow. Luther Standing Bear writes as though the fingers were on the string.

Of course, from the 1600s to Sitting Bull's day, was a time in which Indians and white men learned much from each other and it may be that later Indians had acquired the English archer's method of pulling on the string, though perhaps not with the three fingers used by the archer.

Sincerely,



John Jones

Mr. Stanley Vestal,  
Norman, Oklahoma