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The Westeners

*W.S. Campbell*

December 4, 1956

Mr. Don Russell  
191 Clinton Street  
Elmhurst, Illinois

Dear Don:

Thanks for your letter of the 28th. I am following your suggestion about the Tribune.

I was delighted to be asked to do a piece on Indian Fighters for Bob Howard, but his deadline defeated me.

I have generally found the Indians more reliable than the officers when you check up on them. They were not hampered by loyalty to West Point or worried about newspaper publicity. They were very objective, and their love of prestige depended upon what they did in a fight. They were anxious to see that none of their comrades got away with any honors to which they were not entitled, and they had been at war since their early teens. Their accounts of the fights are generally as accurate and detailed as those of the old Norse sagas, or of a blow by blow account of a prize fight. Over and Over I have found War Department reports at fault when checked with Indians and the diaries of the officers and men concerned.

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Cordially yours,

W.S. CAMPBELL  
(Stanley Vestal)

WSC:vh