

January 24, 1942

Dear Miss Gilpin:

From all reports, U. S. CAMERA 1942 is the best book in the series. I don't think we have a single letter or comment that has been anything but enthusiastic. And whenever a comparison is made -- which is often -- it is always in favor of the current annual. The large size gives the pictures the best possible presentation; the single picture to the page meets with unanimous approval; the printing quality is certainly the best ever and the binding is in keeping with a book of this character.

There were plenty of headaches in production. First of all, paper of the quality used was almost impossible to obtain. The binding price increased 25 per cent from the first estimate to the final job. The inclusion of letter press printing in black and white and four color, gravure in black and white and two color, and eight color lithography meant the biggest printing problem to date. Fortunately, each job was exceptionally good and we produced a volume that merits the acclaim it has received. It was a very expensive book to produce. Twenty thousand copies have been sold and we are sure the remaining five thousand printed will be exhausted this winter and spring.

I would like to see fifty thousand copies of U. S. CAMERA 1943 printed -- and I would like to see each copy sold for less than half of this year's price of \$3.85. I think we can do exactly that if we plan and print U. S. CAMERA earlier and if we continue to receive the advertising revenue that makes the volume possible at the price for which it is sold. I also think we can produce a better book than this year's at half the price, if we can be sure of selling twice as many copies.

In planning U. S. CAMERA 1943, I am thinking of conditions we face today. We want to produce the volume earlier because the times are such that delay might be disastrous -- so we would like to have your pictures as soon as possible so that the selections can be made quickly.

I think this year we should pay for the pictures used. Photographers are going to face problems they have not faced for twenty-five years. It will be impossible to pay a large sum for pictures, but a small sum -- five dollars for each picture used -- will take care of print making and mailing. We have not done this in the past because it is customary not to do so in year books of this kind. Now is the time to change that custom in photographic year books.

The change is in no way due to profits on U. S. CAMERA. I can truthfully state (and the books of U. S. CAMERA are open for inspection by any contributor to the ANNUAL) that I have expended thousands of dollars on U. S. CAMERA without a cent of profit and without a cent of salary. I hope this will not go on for many more years, but obviously the near future is none too bright. There have, however, been some great satisfactions in some of the items produced, in the friendships formed, in the young photographers who have become famed who found their first opportunity in U. S. CAMERA.

For 1943 we have a model in 1942. You will again see a large volume, individual pictures to a page in color and black and white. As to the complete content, I think a certain element of surprise is a necessity and for that reason I would rather not disclose the individual features.

Edward Steichen will judge the pictures again, if his new duties permit. Back in military service, this time in Naval Aviation, he may be unable to take time from his duties to his country. But we'll be sure of his guidance and help under any circumstances, and we hope he will be able to continue the picture selection that has made U. S. CAMERA famous.

Will you send your pictures (black and white or color, or both) as soon as you can -- within the next ten days or two weeks if possible? Will you also send them unmounted if this does not inconvenience you. With so many prints received, (there were 20,000 last year) the mounted prints are more frequently damaged in mailing and in handling. And since express space is at a premium, we'll also be helping Uncle Sam if we send pictures in smaller rather than larger packages. Send any number, any subject, any kind of print.

Cordially,

Tom Maloney

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