

copy
468th. Bombardment Group
Smoky Hill Army Airfield
Salina, Kansas
March 7th.

Mr. Sam Sloan,
Duell Sloan & Pearce
270 Madison Ave,
New York.

Dear Sam:-

Thanks for the catalogs. I am curious why no mention of DESIGN FOR CHAOS and THE GUYS ON THE GROUND. I hope nothing has gone amiss with my two babies.

As the calendar seems to be moving fast with us, I'll be grateful for word as to the financial matters dealt with in our last letters, at your early convenience.

Under separate cover I am sending to you the Mss. of a little book called DENIZENS OF THE DESERT by Forster and Gilpin. The most notable part of it being the fine photographs of Laura Gilpin, now of 807 Center Ave., Wichita, Kansas. Currently she is doing all the photography for the great Boeing plant down there, whose product is closely associated with the Project with which I am connected.

You people already have had contact with Laura Gilpin. Cap Pearce met her, I believe, in Colorado Springs, and later you used her fine photograph of Harold Lloyd Wright - the one later reproduced in U.S. CAMERA etc. So perhaps you know something of her work. To my mind she is the most notable of American women photographers, and I don't except my old chum, the Bourke-White, married or single! She has one lovely little book to her credit, THE PUEBLOS (Hastings House). She is, of course, chiefly identified with the southwest, and its Indians. Also with that extraordinary institution, CENTRAL CITY and its Opera House and what has been done there.

Which last is the chief theme of this letter, which must be a bit hasty, because time is something I haven't got much of. Laura did all the photography for the Central City Opera House Association during the years when it scored its most notable successes. I dare say you know the story of the gorgeous goings-on out there well enough to need no great reminder. Well, the collection of pictures is a joy .. of the great actors, of the sets of Robert Edmund Jones, of the old house itself and its picturesque surroundings. After pawing over them, seeing many many negatives, and peering at the wealth of other material available, I believe a very interesting, beautiful and salable book can be contrived. Because of your own close identification with good photography, it seems to me DS&P is the right imprint. On the crass commercial side I have a suggestion: Through Laura you could establish contact with those who will resume the affairs of the association once the war is cured. In that after-period of prosperity and travel and relaxation, Central City likely will bloom like several roses.

My hunch is that the responsible people at the helm -- they are made up mostly of fine Denver trop-drawer names -- would welcome the right book, with Laura's superb photos, glorifying the past and offering promise of the future. Such a book, timed rightly, would get for the revived Opera House, a tremendous amount of review attention and editorial space. Also, it should sell very well indeed, and for a long time, in connection with the Central City activities and in the Denver region especially. As well as commanding, I should think, a good and steady sale most everywhere, and being a library item of importance.

Well, there you are. Laura is literate and writes very well indeed. With your editorial guidance, I believe she could do the whole job. She is steeped in the lore of the place. My own commercial reaction is that the Association would be willing to place a very nice advance order, on the stipulation that publication date would follow, in some prearranged way, the termination of the war... so as to coordinate with the announcements of the next "season" at Central City.

Beyond this, there is little that I can do. I am, as you know, off to the wars presently... very presently. So won't you please communicate directly with Laura Gilpin whose address I set forth earlier in this letter. Done thoroughly, in a leisurely way, and magnificently illustrated, I believe that here is the stuff from which a fine book and a good property can be made. Certainly were I to be in these parts during the next year, I would collaborate on the project, and with enthusiasm.

Sincerely,

Dear Laura:

Well, I got started on it, and here is my letter. Let me know what transpires. If in my absence the deal falls flat on its face, we'll revive it when I am home again... if you want to. Between us, we could do a swell job, and quickly.

gpp