

Oct. 2, 1950

Mr. John Morris,
LADIES HOME JOURNAL,
Rockefeller Center, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Morris:-

Your letter of long ago last July 25th has been long unanswered for several reasons. I have been out in the Navaho Country working on a new book, moving about, missing mail, losing mail, etc. and now I am home and trying to get myself in order.

I was very happy to have such a nice letter from you about the Conquistadora Procession. Your criticism is valuable indeed and I welcome it. I am quite aware of one of my major weaknesses particularly in this sort of work. That is getting closeups when people do not want them! I know a tend to respect others feelings rather than having my mind completely concentrated on getting a picture no matter what. Nevertheless, I think there is very little emotion displayed in this procession. Perhaps had I been able to get inside the church during the service but that would never be allowed. When I went out to make the picture of the changing of the costume in the Rosario Chappel, it was all arranged that a lovely older woman would be the one. She, at the last minute refused to be photographed and sent her daughter instead. So that was that. There is little pagentry to the procession, just people walking along singing their Pater Nosters, the one spot was the group carrying the statue. I know well enough what you want, but I just dont think it was there. As to the color, no, this statue is not the colorful native thing of the Index of American Design, I wish it were. It has been repainted on occasion, it is not a native piece to begin with, and then it is clothed in various costumes such as you saw in the photographs. To me, the most interesting thing is Father Angelico Chavez deep feeling about the statue. I hoped I had caught that in one of the pictures with him, both in Colo & B.S.W., but perhaps I didnt.

Someone out here has suggested the Catholic paper for this story, (is it Longman-Green?). Perhaps I could try them for some part of it at any rate.

Now I am at work on a Navaho book. I am trying to get a lot of color at the same time. I have a few good 4x5's and quite a few 2 1/2 x 3 1/4's which I shal use in a slide series. The 4x5s I am definately making 66¢ sale.

I wonder if you would be interested in a series on women weavers? I have one of using native plants for dyes, one of a group of Indian women, trader, on looker and some fine finished rugs in a trading post. As yet I do not have either weaving or spinning in color, but hope to get those Bessie too long.

I have recently gotten a Kodak Medalist for action and color slides. I am liking it immensely. It is not as easy to use as a Rolliflex, but I prefer the cut film in both black & white and color and while I have not done a great deal with it, I like it better and better with each use.

I hope you will pardon my long delay in answering your letter. I just never got caught up with my desk, and when it piles high as after extended absences, I get so discouraged at what I should do that I flee to the darkroom instead! To go back the La Conquistadora once more, the final picture. The figure is placed very high over the altar and the daylight that comes in concentrates too low, so it was necessary to use the floods. With just the candles the exposure would take about a week, as it would have to be done after dark to get away from the wrongly placed daylight. Maybe not impossible I go in again see.

Do you still use occasional landscapes? I have lots of those, of-course, it is my line.

With good wishes, and the hope that I may meet you if I ever get to New York again, I am

Sincerely yours,