

Sunday, May 13
1951

Mr. Charles Kerlee,
146 East 56th St.,
New York, 22
New York.

Dear Mr. Kerlee:-

This has been a heartbreaking effort. As I either wrote or told you over the phone, we have been experiencing the worst drought in the history of New Mexico, and that is saying a lot. Last Wednesday as I was returning from another expedition, I was so near the Ghost Ranch that I ran in to see the possible set up for your picture. It was so ideal in every respect that it seemed a certainty. Mr. Earl Vance, who operates the "Dude" ranch of the ranch was very interested and offered any co-operation in the way of cowboys and horses. As these were the genuine article and not just native boys picked up near the other location it seemed a perfect set up. The ranch is 60 miles up the Chama river from here in wonderful vermillion cliffs. (Where they found the baby dinosaur two years ago). It took Thursday to get the car lined up and notify the ranch to have horses and riders ready. The location was such to require an afternoon light to meet your specifications. I got up there at one and the car was to arrive at 3.30. Shortly before the car arrived it began to cloud over and we worked and waited all afternoon only able to get an occasional shot with a moments sunlight. But the sky behind the cliffs anything but a normal New Mexico sky which are usually beyond compare. So we arranged to do it over yesterday. I got up early as before and after I had processed and proofed was not satisfied with the road. Mr Vance even got out the road scraper and we made a road at just the right angle in a slightly different place where my camera angle was better, or rather light was better. As I left Santa Fe it looked like a perfect afternoon. Ten minutes after I got there and with no possible way of notifying the Plymouth dealer, a real dust storm came up followed by a completely overcast sky. I tried three shots and gave up as it was useless for what you want. To-day again is overcast all day, and I imagine that something is brewing to break the drought.

Both Mr. Vance and the car salesman volunteered to try again to-morrow if the weather permits. I know you are or must be getting very anxious