

January 27,
1956.

Mrs. M.S. Abbot;
McIntosh & Otis,
18 East 41st St.,
New York 17, N.Y.

Dear Mrs. Abbot:-

Many things have caused so long a delay in answering your last letter. Moving, setting up a new darkroom, trying to catch up on work, are the major items, but also I have been giving the contents of your letter and also Mr. Holme's much thought. It is all pretty discouraging, but I'm not giving up by any means. I realize all the time and effort you have put in and I can see that you are discouraged over it.

You wrote me some time ago that Rand McNally was interested but their final verdict was that the book needed an Oliver LaFarge on the text. My first reaction was that it was an unfair criticism because so little work has yet been done on the text. However, after mulling this all over I am wondering if perhaps this isn't the answer after all. I am giving serious thought to asking Oliver if he would be willing to do the text on a collaboration basis, like the Paul Strand book. I believe that we feel pretty much alike about the Navaho. He can certainly do the text far better than I. But one major point is that I have put in nearly six years (off and on) work on this, my investment is high, but on a joint project perhaps this is what I should do. I have not yet talked to him about him about it. We tried to get together before I went east for his opinion etc. on the dummy, but he was away and we just never managed the time right. Now do you think his collaboration would make a difference with Mr. Holme? Perhaps Washington would come through with backing if Oliver was in on it, for his name would certainly add authority. Will you give this your thought and let me know?

In the mean time would you please return all the material to me as at present I have nothing to show him. As you know his brother Christopher died about two weeks ago. I have not wanted to bother him just yet, but I saw him the other day and I am sure that any time now would be satisfactory for a conference. But I do want to show him the Strand book, my dummy and also the portfolios of finished prints.

I shall await your response to this idea and by the time I hear from you and the material arrives, I hope to be caught up with work and ready to plunge into finishing this.

With kind regards