

Dec. 11, 1969

Box 77 Pt'

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Dear Miss Gelpin,

I apologize for this long delay in writing you after receiving the Enduring Navajo from you with your signature. It is a wonderful book, I do not know how we could get along without ^{it} to help us understand the Navajos and their country. The pictures, the text, plus the invaluable span of years during which you compiled everything make it complete for our understanding. I cannot ever say how I appreciate it coming from you.

It has taken me too long to write you - caused by a mixture of final details of the Last Historian of the San Luis Valley and trouble left from the Hong Kong flu ¹/₂ year ago! When I wrote I wanted to tell you this story of something that happened in October because it relates to your book and how it helped.

I went alone up Piedra Pintada creek trail
in the San Juans just to explore the mountain
road. I had often wondered what would I do
if I saw a wrecked car and someone lying on
the road. Well, here it happened. A peck-up
hanging over a gally bank and a man in
levis lying motionless on the wet road. I thot he
was dead, went up the road a bit to find room
to turn around to go back for help, threw
a blanket over him to keep him warm if un-
conscious. Then he stirred, finally got up.
He was a Navajo. By then I smelled whiskey.
He needed help of course - the peck up hanging,
a drizzle starting. His road building camp was
7 more miles up in the woods. How to help
in a slightly dangerous set up. I wanted to
help, yet not do something foolishly dangerous.

So we talked, back and forth. Should I see
you again I will tell you what we said, what
I wanted to say here relates to your book. for
through it (I had read it last spring) I felt
as one human being with another and was
sure and tho cautious, was not afraid. I took
him up to his box and brot him back, got home
long after dark. One interesting bit of talk on
the dripping way up. I said ~~as~~ we overlooked
the San Luis Valley about 9500 feet "Did you
know that beautiful mountain Blanca is the
Sacred mountain of the East?" And in a
voice that took on a higher pitch he exclaimed
to me as tho ^{I was} a child. "And now you are talking
like the old medicine man!"

A copy of The Historian #4 is
going in the mail this morning.
We feel our way in this project
in its first year, trying to
catch up on generations of not
understanding our complex valley.
People have been hungry and thirsty
to know the valley, even those who
always lived here. They have accepted
the Historian with joy, and we
are delighted that the historians ^{also} etc
think well of it too.

This letter has been too long, but
there was the matter of how your
Enduring Narajo affected someone's life
that I so much wanted to tell you.

With gratitude,

Sincerely yours,

Ruth Marie Cobble