

Box 144

Thoreau, N.H. 87323

Jan. 2, 1971

Dear Laura Gilpin:

You'll want to know, of course, what progress is being made on The Running Coyote. (I've been thinking about possible names for the book, and this is the name of one of the string designs, and might be a suitable title.)

Apparently Mary's grandfather is no longer willing to record these sacred legends. But this isn't a serious problem.

Bertha Kalleco, John Martin's daughter, came one night about a month ago to discuss the project. And John Martin is very willing to record them.

Bertha and Mary talked mostly in Naaxjo, and were obviously just as interested as I am. Mary needed to know which of the legends Bertha's father had given her when she was a little girl — so that she (Mary) would know which string games she should teach the little boy and girl.

Bentha had brought one of her teenage sons. His grandfather had also taught him some of the string games, and of course had told him the stories they illustrated.

Then Bentha and Mary talked a bit about suitable wearing apparel—
Bentha will make a dress for the little girl, and a blouse for the little boy—

They both worried about jewelry—
I think I can solve that problem—
I have a close friend who owns an Indian arts and craft shop in Gallup, The Zuni shop. Katy is overly generous, and I try not to take advantage of her, but I'm sure that if she has any suitable children's jewelry she will gladly loan it for the occasion.

If not, Lavone Palmer, the trader's wife at Crownpoint, is also very generous. She once loaned me a concho belt ~~valued~~ valued at over \$1,000 to wear all summer in Washington D.C.

I asked Mary yesterday if she thought the weekend of February 13-14 would be a good time, and she said yes, that she could have the children ready by then.

I'll write to Bentha today too. She'll have the clothes ready by then. I'm sure, and will probably bring them early for the children to try on.

I've thought a great deal about how the profits should be divided. Does this seem fair to you — 40 per cent for you, 40 per cent for Mary Chavez, and 20 per cent for me?

I will, of course, give a modest payment to John Martin for recording the legends. (One thinks about all the years these people have spent learning these beautiful legends and songs, and ^{how} little their percentage always is compared to the white people who publish books about their sacred things.)

~~And~~ Bentha and Sam Hallee borrowed \$60.00, I think it was, from me early last fall. They have lots of children to get ready for school. Sam came back two days later ~~to~~ with the entire amount. I told him to wait until later when I knew it would be easier. (They have given me numerous presents, including a beautiful, new, Pendleton blanket.)

Later, I told them to keep that money for a Christmas present, and

that their Christmas present to me could be the little Navajo dress, and the little blouse.

Two other problems will be, of course, marketing the book, and getting the legends interpreted. John Martin told Berta ~~they~~ we would need a very good interpreter, which means, of course, that many of the words are those used only by medicine men.

I don't know of any Navajos whose knowledge of both English and Navajo medicine would make it possible to interpret these legends. I have a number of tape recordings of sacred songs and chants, and I had tried for years to find someone who could interpret them, until Dave McAllester volunteered.

I know Bob Young, but for reasons of ~~personal~~ ^{simple} self protection, he has had to refuse, probably hundreds of times, and more, to interpret for amateur ethnologists.

Anyway, I am planning to impose on Dave McAllester again. I may write to warn him, even before the legends have been recorded. This will give him a chance to prepare to say no. But I'll give him, in return, his own copy of our tape recordings.

The publisher I'll want to contact first, perhaps with a sample picture and legend, as Doubleday. In a recent issue of New Mexico Magazine their senior editor, Peter Hyatt, was quoted as saying, "I happen to be one of those who believe in an American Indian renaissance, ~~and because I am publishing, among other things,~~ (the rest of that sentence is irrelevant.)"

This is irrelevant, probably, but interesting:

A friend who is head of the Music Department of the University of Hawaii, and an ethno-musicologist, mentioned in his christmas note (I had told him about our project) that string designs are one of the folk arts of the polynesian Islands - but now practically lost.

Excuse this scribbled letter. It's getting closer and closer to time for the mail to go out, and I want this to go out today.

Will you let me know if this weekend will be all right for you?

I'm still delighted that you are willing to involve yourself in this.

sincerely,

Mary Perrine

Happy New Year