

406 Ponderosa Apt. 201
Moscow, Idaho 83843
January 20, 1972

Dear Laura:

*The day after I wrote to you Editha returned the pictures (I had sent to her) of my Navajo mother and father, and Mary's children.

I meant to tell you in the letter that Editha had them. I had sent them to her, of course.

May I have the pictures? I'll pay for them, of course. I want to send some to the Martins, and some to Mary Chavez, and keep some for myself.

Bertha Kalleco, John Martin's daughter, I think I told you, made the Navajo costumes for the children, and she wouldn't let me pay her. ~~xx~~ For the little girls' blouse and skirt she used scraps from clothes she had made for her mother. The Kalleco family, more than the Martins, probably, would love to have some of the pictures. Their children--the Kalleco children--have a very special and deep respect for their grandparents. And I don't think they have any pictures of them. Of course I have the nice pictures you took just of John Martin. But there's a sadness in his face that I think might make them feel sad. The other pictures--with the children--look like the grandfather they have always known.

He had to give up practicing Navajo medicine several years ago because he had health problems of his own. And I have seen a sad expression in his eyes a number of times since then. I had never seen sadness in his eyes before.

I wrote to Mary Rose and told her that she would probably hear from you.

I think she remembers some of the stories about the string games. She told me in her Christmas letter, very briefly, about the origin of the first ones. And she told me that she was sure she could find someone who would tell them on tape.

I'm so glad that you want to do this project, and feel able to. You do have courage. I hope so much that it's easier for you to get around, and not so painful.

As I told Mary, the important thing is that the grandchildren, and even great grandchildren ^{for the children} in her room this year (she's teaching kindergarden) should have a chance to see these beautiful designs, and to read the stories about them. And other children--maybe all over the world--should have a chance to share them. And there may be a time--before very long--when it will be too late.

I did tell you, didn't I, that Mary Rose has a cassette tape recorder?

I miss my Navajo friends more and more. This is my old home town, and my old friends have been wonderful, but I wish I weren't so far away from Navajoland. I've had wonderful letters from a lot of my Navajo friends. Several of them have said they wanted to come to Idaho to see me.

In a nice long letter from Christine Blatchford she said that some kids had thrown something at Herb, and broken his leg. So she had been driving her "best friend" (Herb) around. She is divorced from him, because he asked for a divorce. But she worries about him, and wants to help him in any way she can. I am sure that he was so dedicated, and worked so hard--16 to 20 hours a day for years--that his health deteriorated, and then he simply lost confidence in himself.

I had expected him to become a very great leader of Indian people. And he would have if this hadn't happened. He used to tell me that Navajo children were taught that it was wrong to feel anxiety--that it meant you were out of harmony. He is suffering now, I'm sure from anxieties, and is feeling guilty.

Let me know about the pictures--how much I will owe you--or if I may have them. You have the negatives, of course, but, since you will want these pictures for yours and Mary Rose's book, you may not want anyone else to have the pictures, which I will understand.

Sincerely,

Mary