

July 24,
1968

Mr. Frank Wardlaw,
University of Texas Press,
Austin, Texas.

Dear Frank:-

The color proofs came Saturday, and I have taken several days to consider carefully all the problems I see. I am surprised that the printer would submit proofs to you that were so far off as a lot of these are. My first reaction was one of dismay, but as soon as I got myself into a constructive frame of mind, I saw what most of the difficulties are. Some of these go back to the originals, for they were done in the early 1950's before proper color filters were invented. The problems of filtration in this Southwest country are great for the photographers who tackle it in color. I am thinking that for my own salvation we had better date the color plates along with the captions. I would certainly feel better about it.

Before I commence with going over each individual plate, I want to ask a question which I waited to ask until your return. In the copy of the captions for the color plates, I note that C-1 says "cover". Surely you are not thinking of using this for the jacket? I could never agree to that for two reasons. First the jacket print must be a Navaho. I have understood all along that you were going to use the one I had prepared for this of the little family on the burro. Second, the original color shot is not good enough. Third, the reproduction of the land is good enough but the sky wrecks it. I have masked down the proof and you will see what a difference it makes. When engravers and printer start working on skies, disaster usually follows.

C-2 This on the whole is good, though I think the woman's face has been held back a little too much, but this one I certainly O.K.

C-3 This one is better than I expected. It too was done long ago and had a blueish cast but this is O.K.

C-3 This one looks to me as though they have over masked it to reduce the contrast. The sky has gone dead. But perhaps I am over critical of this for the original is so much more brilliance, and vigor.

C-4. This, ofcourse is so far off, but I know it can be corrected. The proof in the dummy is about

Navaho

noon for early work -
20

Santa Clara.

right. This is way over in yellow as I am sure you are aware. You can see the excess yellow in the man's shirt shirt. But this when balanced correctly will be O.K. C-6 This shows that tendency to a mauve pink that seems so prevalent in pictures of the Southwest. This needs more green, and it should be O.K. I am sorry that the original is not sharp. I guess I did not shoot it fast enough.

C-7 First I am distressed that this has been cropped. It is way off in color. This was a more recent original and was a good one. Look at that green sky. This is way over over on yellow and under on red.

C-8 This too, is weak on green which when corrected should bring it in line

C-9 This again is very weak in green and over on red look at the shadows on the white wool.

C-10 This is perhaps one of the very best color pictures I have done. Why has it been cropped? Also this is too flat and much too yellow. Again look at the white wool hanging up. This will have to be done over as will the Canyon de Chelly.

C-11 This is excellent. It could be just a little darker, but I am pleased with this one.

C-12 This needs also to be a little darker. I suppose the red pick up in the silver is in the original, though I do not remember it this strong/. This too has been cropped, but it does not matter so much.

C-13, the covered wagon group, (smaller one). This is almost excellent. Too much yellow in the sky, but it has the contrast that is very good, and the blacks are good. Only a slight correction here.

C-14. Ferris wheel. The blue shirt seems much bluer than I remember it, the sky a little too blue, it was an overcast day. I believe that the blue shirt has been held back too much. It could be darker.

C-15 Woman holding corn. Purple blouse. The upper part of this is very good. The lower part, held back too much. The purple should be much richer, the corn deeper as well as skirt, ground & trees.

C-16 Excellent

C-17 Surprisingly good. A little too yellow. See white socks & shoes.

C-18 I had no idea you were going to make a double spread of this. An excellent reproduction, but the faults of the original do show up. The too purple ground and the too blue in the tree branches but these are in the original. I made this in 1950, no filter.

The transparency you have is a duplicate I made some years ago, and I have checked back to the original 4x5.

C-19 This has gone way too yellow but should be correctable.

C-20 Am unhappy with this one. It has been way over corrected. The foreground should be very much darker. As it is now, the foreground is more important than the rainbow. The mountains are too light. In fact the whole is too light and the foreground must come way down.

C-21. The group is very good. But the lower will just have to be eliminated. The idea was all right but not the execution. (on my part) It isn't sharp, and it just doesn't do. The text will have to carry the idea. I don't like the two on the page either, so let's scrap this one.

I hope you can send some more proofs soon, and please send the transparencies along with them. I will come down to Austin when these are ready to be printed. It will be necessary for someone to watch for any slight shift in color. Photographers like Eliot Porter, and Paul Strand and Alsel Adams, all are on hand to watch for shifts either in color or black and white. Eliot has watched every one of his Sierra Club books through, with the result that there are no off color plates such as are in Philip Hydes. Paul Strand is right now overseeing his new book on Egypt. It is being printed in Dresden, of all places.

I am sorry to be so critical, but right now is the time. The proper printing of the pictures is far more important to me than an error or two in any part of the text. But we want both as right as possible.

The Index went down to Mrs. Spielman yesterday, one reason I have been long with these, but that had to get off first.

With best wishes, and hoping that all goes well,

Most sincerely