

DEDICATED  
TO  
ELIZABETH WAHRAM FORSTER, R.N.

Dear Betsy:-

This is as much your book as mine. Not only have you shared completely in the making of it, but you ~~have~~ taught me to understand the Navaho People, as much as any white person can. Our association with these people goes back to ~~our~~ <sup>a</sup> vacation trip in the fall of 1930 when we were misdirected (by a white man) on the road from Kayenta to Chinle on the western side of the Navaho reservation, and got ourselves wonderfully lost ending up out of gasoline. How we laugh now over this experience. Yet how important it was, for it led you to undertake your job as a field nurse to the Navaho. I can see us now, sitting in the old Buick wondering what we ought to do. I being the daughter of a hardy Colorado Pioneer had to do something about our situation immediately. We were in the middle of a desert-visibility in all directions fifty miles or more. We saw nothing, not even a distant Navaho hogan. So I set forth on foot leaving you to guard the car (from what I don't quite know!) ~~and~~ in hope that another traveler might come along and give you gasoline. How I remember my thoughts as I trudged over that limitless desert, recalling every tale I had ever heard of similar experiences, and how mortified I was that I could have lost my way. I remember meeting a Navaho wagon coming toward me. I tried to talk to the man and his small son saying "Chinle" and pointing in the direction of that distant trading post, indicating that I would pay them to take me there. But the man shook his head, reached into the back of his wagon and handed me three delicious, cool peaches. Finally after an emotionally stimulated two and one half hour walk, I reached Frazer's store. The trader was away but his understanding wife took me and the needed gasoline the ten and one half miles to you and the car. I remember imagining how worried you must be over my long absence. Never will I forget topping a gentle rise in the swelling desert and seeing the lonely car completely surrounded with NAVAHO INDIANS, like a swarm of ants around a dead object. When we arrived, there you were in the midst of the gathering, happily playing cards with your visitors. And your ensuing tale of how they had arrived one or two at a time, seemingly from nowhere, to find out what the trouble was and to see if they could help; your conversation by sign language and the final arrival of an English speaking young Navaho who told you so much and asked you so many questions.

A year later I remember my concern when you came to tell me that you were accepting a position offered you as a field nurse to the Navaho reservation. I asked you countless questions, how would you live, what would you do there all by yourself? Later when I came to visit you, finding you snug though primitive quarters. As I listened to your experiences, I too became interested in these people, impressed by their rugged character, and their mode of life. From time to time my visits revealed the work you were doing, your understanding, your patience, your kindness and generosity, for you literally gave your substance as well as your knowledge and your skill. I saw the response of the Navaho people to your attitude toward them, your willingness to go anywhere at any time when a call came for help. I know the succor you gave, the lives you saved, still unknown to any but those to whom it was given.

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for you literally gave your substance as well as your skill and knowledge. How the Navaho people under your care responded to all you did for them, your attitude toward them, and your willingness to go anywhere at any time when a call came for help. I know the lives you saved, the succor you gave, still unknown to any but those to whom it was given.

~~How well I remember that~~ when, because of the depression, <sup>came</sup> your work was ended and you had to leave. I went down to help you pack and move. I can still re-live that final morning when six of your best friends arrived <sup>to</sup> and sat watching our every move. How, solemnly and without warning, they all stood up, bowed their heads and wept in unison.

During these past twelve years, together we have hunted out old friends, made many new ones, and explored nearly the whole of the reservation. I have watched old friends turn to you for <sup>after 20 yrs</sup> medical aid the moment they saw your face ~~after twenty years~~. What fun ~~we~~ <sup>has been</sup> have had gradually evolving this book! ~~and through~~ it all <sup>out</sup> your understanding of the people, your help when I was after difficult pictures, your sound criticism and encouragement have brought it finally to completion. So, as a tribute to our long and happy friendship- this is your book.