

614 Alameda Road, Santa Fe, N.M.

May 20th
1946.

Mr. Walter Goodwin,
Duell, Sloan & Pearce,
270 Madison Ave.,
New York City.

Dear Wally:-

For two weeks I have been intending to write you that the books are safely back and that I am established again in Santa Fe and my dark room is nearly ready for work. I just couldn't go on in the makeshift way I did last summer, using the bathroom for a darkroom, etc. etc. I finally persuaded my cousin in whose house I am living, to let me fix up a storeroom out in the back. The difficulty of getting anything done is as difficult as usual only much more so. You know Santa Fe, and multiply that by about ten and you have present conditions here. Fortunately I am pretty handy with tools and pipe wrench and a shovel else it would be weeks before anything would be finished. As it is I hope to be in working order this week.

First a report on my long journey up the river. I have many negatives waiting now to be developed and I did accomplish a lot but I also had a lot of disappointments. Weather and skies particularly and much difficulty as far as work in Mexico is concerned. At least I have traversed the entire distance, doing all

that I could. The border towns way down the river are pretty discouraging, the worst of all possible ~~elements~~ being uppermost. I found one enchanting border town, Ojinaga across the river from Presidio. Both places extremely important as far as the history of the river goes and geographically so as they are situated at the junction of Conchos River with the Rio Grande. But I had a most trying and exasperating experience. It is a detour of some 75 miles down there from the main highway. As it is always advisable to have ones care as empty as possible in crossing over, I left everything behind except my three cameras all loaded and ready for business. The U.S. customs officer at Presidio refused to let me take any film over that was undeveloped or out of a sealed box! This an understandable war measure but it has been lifted long ago, there was no question about it at any of the order ports of entry, so there I was 75 miles from my changing bag and more film! It was Good Friday. I left my camera cases in a store and went over empty handed just to see what Ojinaga was like. It is charming little town, beautifully situated, much going on near the church on Good Friday, unspoiled natives and altogether I saw picture after picture and I was very sick over the situation. On my return to Alpine I talked to several persons who know the locality and they all advised against working over there at Easter time as too good a time is usually had by all and they feared some unpleasantness from that cause. The

necessity for waiting over at least three days, plus the fact that the weather was bad the following day and predicted so for several to come made me decide to move on a leave Ojinaga for the fall, and all local persons assured me that October is the best time of year there. As I have a date to work a big Texas cattle round up on Oct. 15th at Marathon, I shall get this section at that time as well as more work in the Big Bend area.

The Mexico problem has been difficult because of the gasoline situation plus the most awful black market you ever knew. Standed tourists were paying as high as \$4. a gal for gas, not pesos but American dollars. \$40. and \$60. for used tires, etc. etc. With my old car and being alone I just plain got cold feet about getting off the beaten path. If my Spanish were not so halting and feeble I might have felt otherwise. So my plan now is to go down to El Paso early in September, find someone who speaks Spanish whom I can hire to go with me on the Mexican side in that area. By that time I am supposed to have my new car. My old one, while still running, has 128,000 miles to its credit, but every so often something happens like having my lights suddenly short out. One of the worst sensations I know, and this happened to me on the long an lonely rroad in the Big Bend on the way back to Marathon. I was able to fix it, but it has ended in having to rewire my whole lighting system, the wires were just worn through. So yo see problems are plenty.

I shall work out of SantaFe in completing what yet needs to be done on the first part of the book, work on text and be ready to a big windup trip down river in the fall.

I shall also have to take some time out to earn some necessary dollars as this whole year has been one of outgo with little coming in and everything costing about twice that one expects. I believe that I am due my second check any time now, & I will be needing it soon. Every once in a while I get worried over what this job is costing me and what the return may be, and this just has to be a book that is tops if it is within my ability to make it so. It is intensely interesting, and the deeper I get into it the more so it becomes and I also realize the size of the undertaking. But the big hump is over, what remains to be done is one of refining and improving and working for balance. I shall write again soon regarding some of the comments on the slips in the book. One or two that you have indicated "out" I hate to see go, and there are several questions I shall ask just as soon as I have gone over it all again more thoroughly. One that I do want to ask now before I go up river again is the elimination of the Forest Ranger. Do you object to the subject in general, the individual, or my pictures? The log scaling seems important to me. The remaining questions I shall take up in another letter soon.

With best wishes, I am

Most sincerely yours,

Please excuse such a badly written letter.