

Feb. 14th
1950

Mr. Charles A. Pearce,
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New York, 16, N.Y.

Dear Cap:-

What wonderful letters you do write. I have been meaning every day to answer the last one, and somehow, I never got caught up with my mail, and the days have slipping by. Your letter of to-day, however, gets an immediate answer.

You have certainly given me a much needed shot in the arm with the news of your reaction to a Navaho book. Ever since Christmas I have been sort of moping around thoroughly dissatisfied with everything I have been doing, and all of it seeming utterly useless except to add a few pennies to the bank account. This book, (I don't think it would be easier to prepare than the Mary Austin!) is a tremendous challenge. I may meet countless frustrations with the inability to get some of the things I will want. I just don't know how long it would take. But now that I have had the experience of RIO GRANDE, I can certainly save myself a great deal, and the research will be concentrated, at least, and all available material right here in Santa Fe.

This book would be the reverse of the river. This time the people would be the theme, and the landscape the background. As Navaho religion is based on the points of the compass, I feel the right handling would be to have the book divided into the four directions. (One of my archaeologist friends to whom I was telling this wanted to know how I would handle above and below). Haven't solved that one yet, but it will be considered! There will be a lot of preparatory work to do right here. I have promised to do a job for the Laboratory of Anthropology, photographing a lot of pottery, which will take me about six weeks, but will also help the exchequer. I shall be doing a lot of reading in my off hours. A letter from Mary Goodwin from Oraon a few days ago gave me news of them. I wish Wally could come thru Santa Fe on their way home for there will be much to

to discuss as to format, type etc. and I have learned the advisability of having those decisions all made first, then build the book to fit.

Last week I called on Mrs. McCoy and she showed me the new letter from D.S.&P. Of-course, I am pleased as can be that you chose Rio Grande for your experiment and that the results are satisfactory. I shall subscribe to the Sunday edition of the Herald Tribune at once.

And now I shall take a deep breath and plunge into another exciting job. At least I shall start with sufficient material and good set of tires, so that will be two to the good. And I do have an adequate darkroom at last, also. That was one of my worst headaches on RIO GRANDE. As soon as I have an adequate outline for the book, I shall send it in.

I am glad that you liked Vernon Young's selection for the Mary Austin. As a matter of fact, I should like to keep that always in mind, and whenever possible do work specially for it as I move around. As I recall it at the moment, there would be a number of things from the Havaho country, as well as others, nearer home. And while I should like to do this, and though I certainly cannot write like Mary Austin I would rather do my own. Such is the ego of the human species. I want to strive for unity of picture and text to a far greater degree than I have yet been able to accomplish.

This brings my best wishes to all of you and my rejoicings at another big task ahead. My fifty ninth year is looming in the very near future, so I had better stop lively.

Most sincerely