

April 26,  
1950

Mr. Charles A. Pearce,  
Mr. Walter L. Goodwin, Jr.,  
DUELL, SLOAN AND PEARCE, INC.,  
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Cap and Wally:-

The contract for the Navaho Book came last week and I have been giving it very careful thought as the changes from the RIO GRANDE contract will, I think, make some difference in my procedure. In order to complete this Navaho Book by April first of next year, I should have to give my complete time to it. Under the terms of the contract, I do not think that I can accomplish this, for I shall have to devote some considerable time to earning the necessary wherewithall to keep going. Therefore, after much consideration, I think it would be far better to spread this work over another year making the deadline April first (or March first if you wish) of 1952. Then I shall make trips into the field of shorter duration, returning to process the work and to keep other work going here at the same time. I definitely plan to spend August and part of September out on the job this year as this season is most favorable to photography. With other trips at other seasons which will give me all times of year, it will round it out nicely, and the added year will give ample opportunity for any necessary re-takes. This seems to me a much wiser plan, and I shall hold the contract subject to your approval before signing and returning yours with the changed date.

I wish I had a clearer understanding of your breakeven point. I know you are right in keeping the price at \$6. I have been doing some studying of other books in this regard, and also of processes. John Collier Jr.'s AWAKENING VALLEY is \$6. but printed in offset. It is a fine job, but the light tones suffer even though the blacks are fine and the book texture also. It so happens that I have run into a procession of people in the last few weeks who prefer the reproductions in my TEMPLES IN YUCATAN to those of RIO GRANDE. These criticisms are always disturbing, though I know that printing of the quality of CALIFORNIA AND THE WEST by letterpress is about the best possible.

I am well aware that I gave you many problems on THE RIO GRANDE, first by being so long in finishing it while in the meantime the cost picture doubtless changed considerably, making it difficult for you. It sounds as though the RIO GRANDE has been standing still since January. I hoped, probably too optimistically, that the edition would be out by May first. The stores here seem to be anticipating good sales this summer, and while sales have slowed down it is still moving. What the Haddon Craftsmen do on the second edition will interest me greatly. Knowing the work they can do and also knowing the quality of the plates they had to work with, I hope the second edition will be a much better job.

As I wrote you, Wally, I have made one trip over to the Navaho country since you were here. I ran into some real car trouble on my 1942 Chevy, which is going to mean a change of some sort. I am inclined to the car like yours with the new engine, but this will also require extra earning power on my part this summer. I shall be going over again for another short trip very soon. The drought continues unbroken, and the situation for all of the Southwest is very bad. Lowrey Hagerman told me the other day that in all his years on his ranch he has never experienced such drought. Not a drop since last September. This is going to be extra hard on the poor Navahos.

I await your decision on the change of deadline before sending you the signed contract. With best wishes to you both, I am

Most sincerely