

Maria Martinez

Potter of San Ildefonso

Photos and Interview By Laura Gilpin

A short time ago, I went out to San Ildefonso Pueblo to see Maria Martinez, the great potter and my friend of long standing. I took with me a large photogravure of a picture taken by Edward S. Curtis, the famous photographer, in 1905. Its subject was a corn dance there.

I was making a gift of the print to the pueblo. Before presenting it to the governor, I wanted to see how many people Maria could identify of perhaps HOW MANY? shown. To my surprise, she named at least eight among the dancers and chorus from that long ago.

Several friends joined us. There were "oohs!" OR WHATEVER? at sight of the small cottonwood that today is a great tree in the pueblo's north plaza.

-2-

Maria and I sat under the portal of her WHICH? son's house.

It was a lovely summer day, no wind . . . but the rush of children running toward the tree in a field-day event on this Santiago Day.

Maria and I dropped into reminiscence about persons known to both of us in the past. She spoke first, and so warmly, of the late ~~MARIA~~ M. the eminent anthropologist. ~~Dr. Kenneth M. Chapman,~~ A SHORT QUOTE? This is as it should be, for Dr. Chapman had been ~~one~~ one to encourage her and her husband in their pottery-making as far back as 1908. Maria was shaping the pots and Julian decorating them with sure, skilful designs. ~~Dr. Chapman's~~ This was the beginning of their lifelong achievement.

Maria spoke SHORT QUOTE? of Dr. Chapman's interest in the variety of designs, the perfection of her pots, bowls and plates. (Dr. Chapman ~~returned in his compliments~~ expressed this admiration in his book The Pottery of San Ildefonso Pueblo.)



-3-

Maria spoke also SHORT QUOTE? of Dr. Edgar L. Hewett IDENTIFY, who made early excavations at what is now Bandelier National Monument, some 30 ~~min~~ miles northwest of Santa Fe. She visited there when Julian worked with the archeologists. She also visited them at the nearby ruins of Tsankawi, Otowi and Puye.

She spoke of other scientists she had known, of Dr. Alfred V. Kidder, who work at what is now the Pecos National Monument, and of Dr. NAME Harrington, Jess Nusbaum (sp?) and Dr. Sylvanus Morley. She remembered them vividly. QUOTE?

She spoke of others, of Ina Cassidy, IDENTIFY, of Edith Warner, IDENTIFY, and of Mrs. Van Stone FULL NAME?, who did so much to help with sales of pottery for many Indians during her many years at the Santa Fe Art Museum. QUOTE? ELABORATION.

-4-

A.J.

She spoke of FIRST NAME Connell and the Boy's (?) School at Los Alamos, and of the great change at war's beginning when Los Alamos became the great scientific laboratory it now is, and of all the secrecy during those war years. QUOTE?

She spoke QUOTE? of the many changes in Santa Fe and the surrounding country and of the slow development QUOTE of education ~~and the change in the~~ at San Ildefonso.

~~And she then began to laughingly~~ She spoke of degrees conferred by the University of Colorado and New Mexico State University, then laughingly told of a grandchild who asked how she could get a degree when she had never gone to school. COLLEGE? QUOTE?

ma



11+46=57

-5-

Maria's education from the beauty she developed in her field . . . one in which she stands at the highest level as attested by many medals won, citations received, and trips all over the country to demonstrate her skills.

With all the changes, the ~~man~~ bustle of modern life, San Ildefonso still lies quietly beside the Rio Grande, its people resting on a dignity of many generations and acceptance of life as it comes. Maria has undergone many hardships WHAT that are now passed. She is 85 BOOK SAYS SHE BORN ABOUT 1885, and when I took my leave I was refreshed by ~~man~~ her presence and aware of the deep richness of her life. She is a beautiful person.