

CLARK, DODGE & CO.

61 Waco St. N.Y.C.

PRIVATE WIRE

TO Dear Porter -

1/31/39.

Thanks for your letter. Glad the Sierra Book reached you. It's \$15. I sent him check to cover it so you can send it to me whenever it's convenient. In case you should want to reach Adams Sometime his home (& one studio) is just Yosemite National Park, Calif. Also to Las

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(2)

To _____

To make a living will involve all sorts of anguish. It's precarious at best. (Ask Adams, Weston, Steichen or any of them) If you have sufficient independent means it's one thing. Then you can go ahead, maintain your integrity & do what you feel. Any commercial work involves compromise - and

a house & darkroom where he
does Photo-murals & commercial
work at 131-24th Ave. S.F. Calif.

I'm glad to hear you are getting
a Protar and am sure you will
enjoy using it. Steiglitz told me
you are thinking of photography as a
full time job. Far be it for me to
advise you but if anyone should
ask my opinion I would urge extreme
deliberation - my reaction is against
it. To go into it full time - professionally

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(3)

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TO _____

~~not~~ 3 but about 7 balls in the
air at the same time. I'll give
you some of the headaches he's
been through when I see you.
And I'm not making any
comparisons — only want to let
you know some of the realities of
the situation. Because I'd really
like to see you go into it — if you

from my slight acquaintance I
would presume that it would be
distasteful and might take all the
joy & fun away. Adams
combines a number of characteristics -
burning idealism, incredible
energy - unique Salesmanship,
magnificent technical skill and
experience as well as creative talent
and artistic perception & sensitivity -
and he has a hell of a time most
of the time. He barely ~~gets~~ gets out
a precarious livelihood by keeping

(4)

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TO _____

unless he breaks away & lies on
just for a few days. I'll let
you know if I hear anything
definite.

His book "Making a Photograph"
pub. by Studio @ 3.50 retail Sold
26,000 copies on which he netted
10¢ per - to cover all his time
prints for reproduction & all the

could do so - and keep on as you
have started. I not only enjoyed
the show hugely - better the second
time than the first but have
been liking the prints better the
more I see them - which is the
acid test. Have no definite
word from Adams as to his trip
to try. Last letter spoke of the
big rush - said he had two months
work booked ahead. I would guess
he wouldn't be apt to get on in Feb.

(5)

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TO

leading men in St. Did the
Sierra Book — which was
underwritten (expected to cost
\$3,500 ± but ran over \$1,500. for
out of pocket expenses — plates,
printing, paper, tipping-in,
binding, mailing, etc) and I
doubt if it pays out 500 copies
@ \$15 = 7500. meaning he got nothing.

materials used to produce them.
He makes photo murals commercially,
makes photo mural screens. He runs
the Yosemite Studio - a foot
cassession - doing amateur service
work developing, printing, enlarging -
sells postals made from his negatives.
Writes articles for Zeiss monthly. Sells
their cameras, lenses, etc. Does all
sorts of advertising work for The
Southern Pacific, Yosemite-Curry Co.
Takes architectural pictures for the

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TO _____

job if it comes to compromising
same point on which he
really feels like going to the
mat. And I know of several
instances. He is pretty reasonable
about it too and will go almost
any length on any matter which
doesn't compromise what he
considers his artistic integrity,

really contributed his time,
and all the prints. &c., &c.
He maintains his ideals but
it's a fearful sweat and he
really is going at top speed
about 18-20 hours a day.
And at that he tells me he
couldn't do it unless his
wife had a modest income of
her own. This has enabled him to
maintain a reasonable degree of
independence so he can chuck a

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show. They can't be turned out
en masse - As you know it
may be almost impossible to
duplicate some of them and get
the real quality. Levan West
("Ivan Dimitri") gets out prints -
reproductions (Kennedy & Co.) @ \$5.
and they're not as good as the
ones in Adams book which see

you'd be surprised what some
advertisers, agencies will ask
& expect to have you do. Most
important when you have to
grind stuff out, it loses a lot of
it's lure - and the kind of
things you have done can be
ground out. And as to
collectors of fine print - I don't
believe there are a dozen individuals
in the country who will pay
anything like the worth of a really
fine print - like the ones in your

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TO _____

prints. Saw the first cut of
his picture "The City" run
off - it's going to be swell.

David H. McAspin

60 @ \$15 or 25¢ each. And his
editions are limited to 100 each -
deduct production cost, figure
100% write up for selling costs. I
doubt if he nets \$50. apiece for all
his work, time, materials. And he's
prolific too - Excuse the length -
look forward to seeing you both
soon - Let me know when you
come down - O'Keefe has left for
Honolulu. Did you meet
Henwar? Who got one of your