

CHARLTON OGBURN
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OAKTON, VIRGINIA 22124

28 May 1976.

Mr. Eliot Porter,
Route 4 Box 33,
Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87501.

Dear Mr. Porter:

Your most generous letter to John Willey has left me unable to call up the words that would do justice to the joy it has brought me. You will have to imagine what it would be like to have so immensely gratifying a response to one's work from an artist of your attainments and distinction, the kind of person, moreover, whom one especially hoped it would appeal to. Writing is often not much fun, but to have a reward like this--what a difference to a life it makes! I received a copy of your letter yesterday afternoon and have been soaking up its balm ever since.

Speaking of writing, I wish your proper work left you more time for it. I vividly recall the eloquence of your defense of Glen Canyon--indeed in an earlier book of mine could find no better way to picture what had been threatened and was subsequently lost than to quote from what you had written. As for your work with a camera--my feeling is that if Nature were personified as we sometimes visualize her, like Ceres, she would become so rapt gazing at her image in your photograph as to bring the earth to a standstill. And the better I know the subjects--birds, for example--the greater my awe of your achievement is. When I have been over the ground, as I have the Smoky Mountains, I tell myself that Nature produces effects for Eliot Porter she just doesn't for others.

John Willey's secretary sent me by mistake the letter he wrote you. I put the letter back in the same envelope it came in and readdressed it to you, which will account for the black patch on the envelope. I certainly second all John said.

I hope something may happen to give you as much satisfaction and pleasure as you have given me--and Vera, too.

With every good wish,

Sincerely,

Charlton Ogburn