

Pohawar

March 26, 38

Dear Nannie -

It seems to me that I've not written you since sometime in Jan. If I did write from Delhi, please forgive repetition. So much has happened that I can only give you a bare outline anyway. I feel, due to the variety of experiences and environments ~~which~~ which I have encountered that I have lived at least nine lives since arrival in India.

I went to Jaipur with the intention of sight seeing for two days. Quite unexpectedly I had several portrait commissions which kept me there for 15 days. Among my portraits was one of Sree Chhola Maharaj Kumar Sahib, in other words, the second son of the Maharaja, a very handsome 2 year old child, who also, due to the disciplining of his English governess was the best behaved youngster I have encountered. It was of course an opportunity to get an inside angle on life in the palace. His Highness who is only 24, is very Westernized in fact Hollywoodized, and, as a studio I used the bed room of Madeleine Carroll the film star. Two years ago she was staying there unchaperoned, and H.H. had ~~threatened~~ threatened to marry her which naturally scandalized the Court. She had to leave, but returned this year with a husband of convenience, the Earl of Jersey, and is again peacefully installed as a guest.

Also I did a portrait of the Commander in - Chief of the Jaipur army, General Amar Singh, who, although he has been painted dozens of times, standing, sitting, on horseback, at polo, in action on the field of battle etc etc. was more pleased with my little sketch of him than with any of these pretentious paintings.

Jaipur is extremely colourful, the buildings all soft rose, trimmed with white delicate arabesques. The lower caste women were brilliant screaming colours and much jewelry, and, as in Lucknow the streets are filled with animal life. The most beautiful hand printed

sheer muslins are made there, also heavier printed cotton materials. I regret now that I did not buy something for you, but it may be that I shall go back: very lovely fast color saris, which could be used as curtains, or bed covers, etc coarse blue cloth with all over patterns in red and green very good for upholstery. What I have seen ~~else~~ where does not compare in beauty.

From Jaipur I motored with H.H.'s air pilot to Delhi, for "Delhi Week", the annual horse and cattle show polo tournaments etc. The city was crowded with ~~honey~~ people from all over India, especially native princes and I found it an amusing spectacle.

The Dewan of Bundi, who was in Delhi with his Maharaja, suggested that I return to Rajputana to do a portrait of his H.H. Since Bundi was on my list as being one of the most picturesque places in India, I jumped at his suggestion and went South again, via Muttra (fine museum of early Indian sculpture) Agra (where the Taj Mahal held up to all expectations) and the deserted city of Fatepur Sikri. Bundi is a completely medieval town about 30 miles from the railway, the only Europeans there being the Dewan, or Prime Minister and his wife. Queen Mary went there in 1911, and the motor car which she used is still the glory of the Royal coach house. The tents in which she and her retinue lived, too, were more or less intact and were being set up again in the garden of the Royal Guest House in which I stayed, in preparation for the wedding of the Raj Kumar to a Ratham princess which is to take place next month and which will be attended by ten of the biggest Rajput princes. The wedding proved to be an obstacle to my plans, since there were already in progress so many daily ceremonies & processions, so much entertain-

ment of distinguished visitors, and so much embellishment of the city to be attended to, that His Highness could find no time to sit for his picture. Anyway, he's not very prepossessing, stoop-shouldered and big tummyed, 43 years of age but looking 15 years older, and usually dressed in brown skull cap, white badly cut Jodhpurs and a striped shirt with the tails ~~sticking~~ hanging out.

We went on two tiger hunts and I was really sorry for the poor old Tiger who didn't have a chance against the enormous expedition which went after him: 8 motor cars, 8 buses, 10 camels, half the Royal Cavalry, one elephant, 100 beaters, several hundred villagers, police, Ministers of State, and commissary, to say nothing of the guests who were to do the shooting. As I was not one of the guests of honor I didn't even carry a gun which did not in the least detract from my appreciation of the picnic.

Doubleday Doran had written so enthusiastically about my Mei Ti book (it will be out in June) that I had Bundi in the back of my mind as a setting for another. However by the first of March the heat was already beginning; one would wake in the morning choking with hot dust in the nose, and I could never have endured the climate long enough to do a book, so I moved northward, with a two day stop in Lahore to Peshawar where the weather is ideal for the moment, and I am staying in a soldiers' cafe' in a garden of trees and lovely flowers.

I have never, by the way, seen more beautiful flowers than in Delhi last month: English roses better than any in the U.S.A., and sweet peas larger

than those of Tacoma, Wash!

This is a real frontier town filled with swashbuckling  
skallewags from Kabul, Waziristan, and the Punjab.  
Devilish looking ruffians who would stick a dagger in  
your back for two coppers. Very few foreigners dare to  
go into the native city at all, but I make it my  
daily haunt and have many hawk-like bearded friends  
in the cafes. Picture production is going well so  
I shall remain here for several weeks - (I've been  
here two already). The red shirt with white stripes  
is still with me, and I count on finding some-  
one here who will display it to its best  
advantage tails and all. It was recently worn  
by a Major at an Officer's Club ball with great  
acclame.

Thanks for all the news about Mexico, you  
must have had a swell time. quite typical of  
Bill Spitting to be rushing off to send a telegram.  
Madge for once wrote me a good letter about the  
family so I feel well posted on Mexican affairs.  
You never acknowledged two pieces of brocade  
and one piece Chinese embroidery which were sup-  
posedly mailed to you from a shop in the Miyako  
Hotel Kyoto last Sept 21<sup>st</sup>. I've written the shop to  
try to trace them.

I've not been able to resist buying some  
carpets for you here, only small ones so far  
and hope you can find some corners for them.  
If Stan buys a plane you could jump over  
here and take them back. — me too — maybe?

Always yrs

S. Leo