1924

Correspondence from Alice Walker, 1924-1941

Alice Walker

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April 6, 1924

Miss Alice Walker told me of a silver cross she once saw in possession of an old Indian woman.

The time was back in the eighteen nineties, she thinks, for she took pictures of the Soccalexis children and they were all young. She does not remember the name of the old woman, though she formerly had it written down, but she was very old, about ninety-seven, she thought. She was with a granddaughter who spoke English. Asked if she would let her picture be taken, she hurried off into her house and Miss Walker was on the point of leaving when the granddaughter said she had gone to get her cross. (Miss Walker though she was so superstitious about being taken without it.) She came back we ring this wonderful cross of heavy hammered silver at least with a second bar above the first. All the ends were a little pointed and it had around the border near the edges the wavy line of double dots so characteristic. Over
Miss Walker has the negative of the picture still somewhere showing the old lady wearing the cross. She kept it so carefully hidden that after her death it was never found—either from being too securely hidden or from some one having stolen it immediately after she died.

There is a picture in (9th?) a bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum of flying a letter and mailing this cross; dated 1924 before it is anywhere given in exact reference.
Oct. 10, 1927

My dear Mrs. Eckstorm,

At last I am able to send you a photograph of the Indian woman wearing the silver cross that I told you about. Rather an unusual cross, I think.

It was cut from silver and finished as the
old silver breast plate that I have been
had searched for. The photograph which I never
found, but a few weeks ago came across a box of
negatives and was surprised
and delighted to find this
among them and had
reunited. I wish I
were sure of the old woman's
name.
Hoping I shall see you this
fall.
Most sincerely Alice R. Walker
Dear Mrs. Eckstorn,

The cross has appeared again. While I took the photograph to the Indians who have a little house here where they sell baskets in the summer, the man called "Mary" came here! She immediately said, "Is a picture of my great-grandmother?" I then said the cross."
Whereupon she ran to the house and brought out the selfsame erbs which is on her great grandmothers neck in the photograph my brother took.

The old lady was Mary Susep Finaneris.

The great-granddaughter

Mary Ketchum Lewis

wife of J. P. Lewis.

The choks is marked

R. C. = Regina Corli
Queen of the Sky.
I tried to impress them that it is an important piece of jewelry. I think they appreciate it, for several people have wanted it, and they mean to keep it.

Am enclosing some photographs of Mary and the Clock. You may like to have them to compare with the older photographs.

I am so sorry that you had such a serious accident.

By this time, I hope...
you are able to be home and that the treatments are needed and comfortable.

Most sincerely,

Alice P. Walker

Sept 5. 1941