

JOHN HENRIK CLARKE
P O Box 51 College Station
New York 30, N. Y.

June 19, 1960

Mr. Peter Abrahams
Coyaba Red Hills
St. Andrew, Jamaica, B.W.I.

Dear Peter:

I hope you will forgive this long delay in communicating with you. I read your Holiday article with much interest and was delighted at last seeing it in print.

James Baldwin recently published a Harlem article in the July issue of the Esquire magazine. All of your friends that you met in your two trips to New York, are still interested in seeing you again and you will be most welcome when you decide to pay us a visit.

I am sorry that I was unable to see Victor Reed when he was in town. He came to see Ruth Jett, and I expected him to either come by or call. No doubt he did call and I was out. Please tell him that I regret having not the chance to see him.

I am doing as much writing as my time allow. Now that I am holding down a job again--much against my will--I am involved in more African projects that I can keep track of, as usual, but mostly my concern is of South Africa, where the need is the greatest.

Wednesday next week, I will attend the 3 annual Conference of A.M.S.A.C., at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. On July 19th will leave the states for Cuba to attend a Hemisphere Writers Conference. A lot of writers from the West Indies will be there. I hope you can find time to attend. An invitation to you from the Cuban government is forthcoming.

Sincerely yours,

John H. Clarke
John Henrik Clarke

JHC:DG

559 West 158th. St.
New York 32, N.Y.
May 17th. 1960

Mr. Peter Abrahams
c/o Holiday magazine
Independence Square
Philadelphia 5, Pa.

Dear Sir,

I have just finished reading your article, The Meaning of Harlem, in Holiday magazine. As a native New Yorker who lived in the area for many years I was able to appreciate the article very much. More than once, while reading your vivid story, I found myself captured by nostalgia.

I think that the only part of the account which left me somewhat dissapointed was when you referred to yourself as a negro. To explain this in some detail I have enclosed a newspaper clipping. The sentiment expressed in the clipping is certainly not representative of majority thinking on the subject. I am sure, however, that it does speak for a significant and growing minority. You may have even encountered evidence of this attitude among some of the African Americans whom you met during your visit to Harlem. It may be called nationalism by some. I like to think that it is merely simple logic.

Regardless of my feeling on this particular subject, I wish to say again sir, you did a beautiful piece.

Very respectfully yours,

Melvin E. Ware, Sr.
Melvin E. Ware, Sr.

Use Of Word, 'Negro' Misnomer Says Critic

By MELVIN E. WARE

When the subject is given serious thought, there can be little doubt that the person who should be most anti-negro is the so-called negro himself. (Negro is written with a small n because there is no rule of grammar justifying its capitalization). His antithesis should be the word, "negro."

~~When the subject is given serious thought, there can be little doubt that the person who should be most anti-negro is the so-called negro himself. His antithesis, however, should be the word negro.~~

At this stage of his intellectual development the African American should be willing and eager to throw off his shackles of inferiority towards things African. There can be no denying that he has been a victim of his conditioning but even that is no longer an effective excuse for a complex that is so self damaging.

Mistaken Gift

The African American did not get the name, negro, by any desire of his own. It was mistakenly given to him by the English speaking slave trader who heard his Spanish counterpart use the word to describe the color of the slave. It probably never occurred to him that there were other African peoples who did not have the same facial characteristics as those that were brought to this country from West Africa.

They were nevertheless, just as dark of skin and, consequently, negroes (blacks) by the Spanish description. The liberties taken with the meaning of the word by the English speaking slave trader is no doubt, the cause of much of the confusion among the anthropologists today regarding it.

With increasing frequency we are told that a black man is not black. No less a publication than Holiday Magazine recently had a spread on Africa in which the Watussi and the Ethiopian were described as not negro. This was, to say the least, confusing since both of these peoples are among the continent's darkest. So, just what was meant by the article must remain a question to many of its readers.

Word Alienates Africans

There is probably no English word, adopted or otherwise, that does more to alienate people of African origin from each other than the word, negro. Emperor Haile Selassie stated his position on the word very clearly. While taking much pride in the word black, he rejected any association with, negro.

Adlai Stevenson made a significant statement upon returning to this country from Africa several years ago. He said, in effect, that during his entire stay on that continent he did not recall hearing the word, negro, used.

In his Africa Freedom Day speech at Carnegie Hall, young and brilliant Tom Mboya of Kenya, may have been most eloquent of all on the subject. He was eloquent by his omission of it from his remarks. It remained for A. Philip Randolph to dispell the charm of an otherwise perfect occasion, when he stepped back into character. When Mr. Randolph chose to refer to African Americans as negroes the event lost much of its meaning for many in the large gathering.

Capitalizing "Negro"

Some years ago a well meaning group of African Americans demanded that the word, negro, be capitalized.

Their demand was not supported by any rule of grammar but they were, no doubt aware of this. It was merely a gesture to obtain some degree of respect and dignity as a racial group. The country's press, for the most part, was cooperative. Whatever opposition there was to the demand came from the South. The press in that section of the country continued to use the small n.

And, much as we may recognize its faults on many things racial, its grammar is beyond question in this instance. The truth of the matter is, instead of being honored by capitalization, the word should have been rejected. At best it is a misnomer.

When the African American can find the inner strength to defy his years of conditioning and refuse to continue being a disciple of conformity, he will recognize the word for what it is, a stigma of slavery. A word created in slavery and hardly worthy of honor.

The time is long overdue but not too late for African Americans to demand restoration of their birth-right. What Tom Mboya of Kenya said of the African is like-wise true of the African American, "We owe an apology to no one."

HOLIDAY

A Curtis Publication

Independence Square, Philadelphia 5, Penna.

HARRY G. NICKLES, Associate Editor

September 2, 1959

Mr. Peter Abrahams
Coyaba
Red Hills P. O.
St. Andrew
Jamaica
B.W.I.

Dear Peter:

I am happy to report that we like your revision of
HARLEM very much.

The feeling here is that we can amalgamate the two
versions and come up with something outstandingly
fine, but that will be decided when an editor tackles
the actual task. In any case, you can be sure we
will treat your copy with the skill and respect it
deserves.

Best,

Harry

HN:je

Cc - Curtis Brown

SIR JOHN HOTEL

Formerly Lord Calvert Hotel

May 23, 1960

276 N. W. 6th STREET - MIAMI 36, FLORIDA

Mr. Peter Abrahams
Holiday Magazine
Independence Square
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

Your Harlem Story in the current Holiday Magazine provided me with a remarkable insight into an area about which I have heard many things but have known very little.

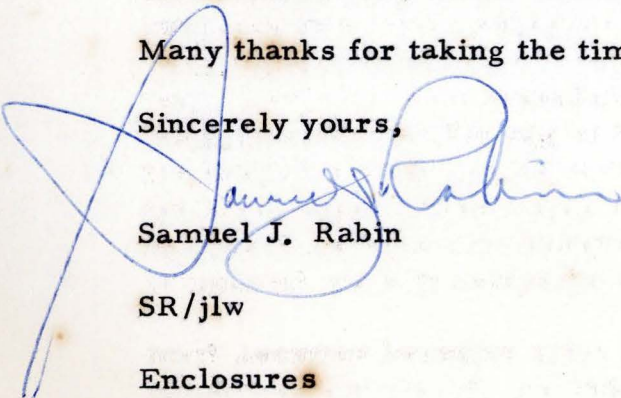
I think that I have a story here at the Sir John Hotel which would be of interest to the readers of Holiday Magazine as a follow-up to the Harlem Story. We have three and one-half acres of a tropical, vacation paradise right in the very heart of Miami.

In August, we will celebrate our tenth anniversary. We have advertised, we have sent hundreds of thousands of letters and done the many other things which should have created an impression on the public, but I still find many persons who have never heard of the Sir John. I might add at this time, that this is an integrated facility -- both from management through personnel and guests.

Enclosed is a letter which we sent to the Negro press. I would appreciate hearing your thoughts on the possibility of doing a story about the first city in the United States which advertised in Negro media with Negro models to this particular public. I am sure you can appreciate the resistance which an idea like this is immediately faced with in the average resort community.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely yours,


Samuel J. Rabin

SR/jlw

Enclosures

SIR JOHN HOTEL

Formerly Lord Calvert Hotel

276 N. W. 6th STREET - MIAMI 36, FLORIDA

This letter could never appear as an advertisement in any publication---not that it is too hot to handle---but because its appearance in advertisement form might slow down the progress outlined below.

In 1954, I came to the Sir John Resort Hotel in Miami as manager, faced with an untenable situation. My job was to invite and be host to Negro vacationers who couldn't even get a taxi from the airport---instead, a car driven by a Negro driver was called and two hours later a tired, distraught, and antagonistic guest showed up at the hotel.

To say the least, the mental attitude of these people was anything but conducive to enjoying a vacation.

True, as long as they stayed at the hotel (which is more like a complete little city, with three and one-half acres right downtown) they had a nice time. As soon as they ventured beyond the hotel's protective cover, embarrassment was commonplace.

My problem consisted of finding ways and means of seeing to it that Negroes could enjoy this marvelous climate, just as do white vacationers. Remember, there are over 500 hotels in greater Miami catering to white persons---more than any other city in the world---so the attraction, year 'round, must be fantastic---and it is!

While I was helpful in the solution to many of the facets of this problem----the NAACP, the Urban League, and many dedicated individuals, both Negro and white, have produced almost magical results.

Today, while we still have some remnants of the old days---more and more Negroes are finding Miami a most satisfying resort city.

Allow me, if you will, to crystallize and enumerate some of the outstanding changes which have taken place:

1. The City of Miami has become the first city government in the United

BARBER SHOP - BEAUTY PARLOR - COMPLETE SHOPPING CENTER - HEALTH CENTER - BEAUTIFUL SALT WATER POOL - LARGE AIRY ROOMS AND SUITES, AIR CONDITIONING AND TELEVISION OPTIONAL, DONE IN ULTRA MODERN DECOR WITH KITCHENETTES, TUB SHOWER AND TELEPHONE IN EVERY UNIT - AIR CONDITIONED RESTAURANT, AN ENCHANTING AIR CONDITIONED LOUNGE AND OUR FABULOUS SIR JOHN CLUB COMBINE TO MAKE THE SIR JOHN HOTEL A COMPLETE VACATION PARADISE.

States to take space in Negro publications, inviting this specific consumer group to enjoy their vacations here.

2. More and more hotels, both in Miami and Miami Beach, which once catered to white only, are opening up to Negro guests.
3. The municipal golf courses are open every day to all golfers.
4. The Flagler Dog Track is now open to everyone.
5. All tourist attractions such as the Seaquarium, the Villa Viscaya, the Monkey Jungle, Parrot Jungle, Serpentarium. . . are open to all.
6. Transportation, in all phases, is integrated.

More important than any of these is the healthy attitude of this entire area toward the complete elimination of prejudice and bias. We have not reached the ultimate by any means in this regard---but we are getting there---fast!

I have done everything possible in the political field to assist in making Miami a better city in which to live and vacation.

The Sir John Hotel has an integrated clientele.

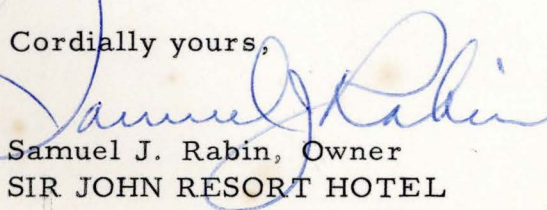
I thought you might like to witness for yourself the things of which I write. Therefore, please let this letter serve as an invitation for yourself and another person, to be my guests for a week, at the Sir John Hotel. All I ask is that you give me adequate notice of your anticipated arrival and departure dates so that we may make certain of your reservation.

I sincerely feel that a short stay down here will convince you that Miami is truly a city "south of the south". As such, it may well be the leader in the removal of discrimination.

My hotel, therefore, is fighting "the good fight". You can help us by letting the Negroes of America know of what we are and what we think. I feel that by helping us, you will help the cause for which we are jointly striving.

Please let me hear from you.

Cordially yours,


Samuel J. Rabin, Owner
SIR JOHN RESORT HOTEL

SJR/mts

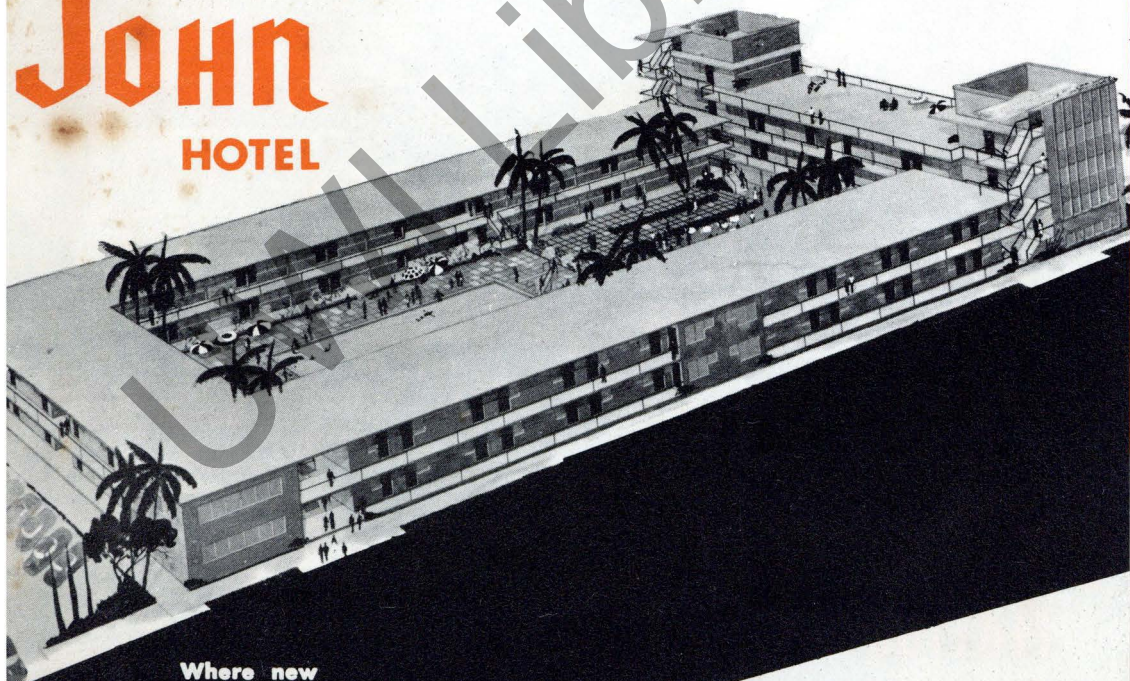
(This letter is being sent to leading editors and feature writers in the United States).

for the finest
vacation —
under the
SUN . . .

it's the **RESORT
HOTEL of the
STARS**

THE **SIR
JOHN**
HOTEL

Whoever you talk
to — wherever you go —
whatever you do . . . whenever pleasant
memories are remembered . . .
you'll hear the name **SIR JOHN HOTEL** on
wonderful Sir John Square



Where new
and lasting friend-
ships are made in an at-
mosphere of Hospitality

SIR JOHN HOTEL

Formerly Lord Calvert Hotel

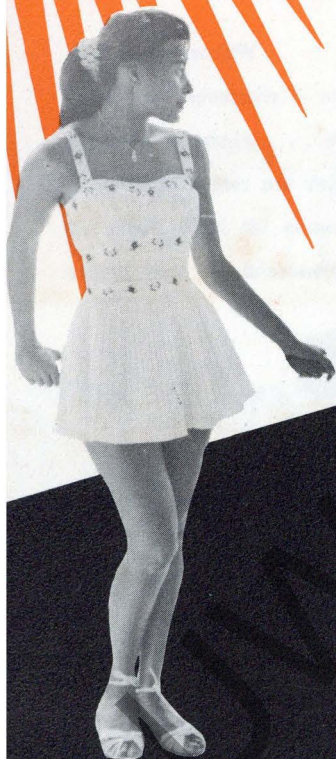
SIR JOHN SQUARE, MIAMI, FLORIDA

all
year
'round

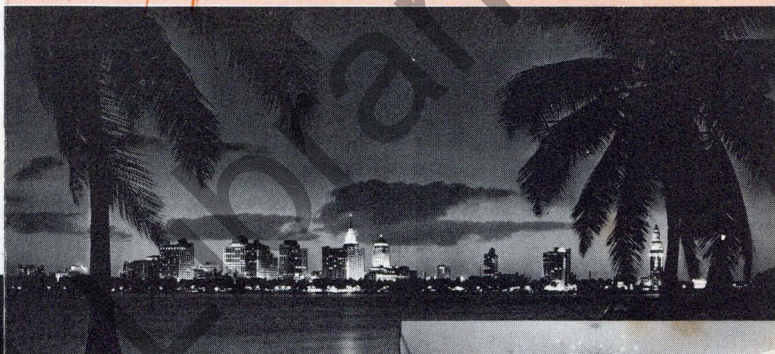
THE **Sir John**

*all out for
fun
hospitality
relaxation*

From the moment you enter the Sir John you'll receive a "ROLL OUT THE ROYAL RED CARPET" welcome. And that's just the start of a memorable, unforgettable program of good things to come. You'll never, never forget this vacation.



Miami
florida



SIR JOHN CLUB

Beautiful — Spectacular — Dazzling with the best nightly entertainment.



MODERN ROOMS

Spacious and beautifully furnished with private bath and shower, phone and kitchenette, too.



COCKTAIL LOUNGE

Dim lights, music as you like it — an enjoyable evening of informal entertainment.



OLYMPIC SWIMMING POOL

Getting into the swim of things is easy at the Sir John. This King-Size swimming pool will be your center of pleasure and relaxation. Comfortable lounge chairs always on deck.



A Delightfully Picturesque Vacationland

Here the climate is delightful the whole year 'round.

Defies Description . . .

Your First or Second Honeymoon

There is no better way to start your "life together" than this land meant for young love.

That goes for you "young-at-hearts" celebrating anniversaries and good fortune.

The "Moon over Miami" is reserved for our guests — in addition to everything else we'll give you the moon.

**MOON
over
MIAMI**

. . . TO YOUR HEALTH

The Sir John Health Center is equipped with the very newest equipment — staffed by experts. We guarantee you'll feel wonderful!

SERVICES INCLUDE . . .

- Rub Downs
- Electric Spot Reducing
- Electronic Facials
- Whirlpool Body Baths
- Infra Red Radiation
- Ultra Violet Rays
- Deep Spinal Radiation
- Colonic Irrigation



EXCELLENT FACILITIES FOR CONVENTIONS, SOCIAL AFFAIRS, CONFERENCES, AND MEETINGS



THE SIR JOHN HOTEL

for the
FUN OF IT!

Planned sightseeing tours

Shopping — for
the latest fashions
and gifts

Cocktail hours for
meeting and greeting

Ping Pong and
Shuffleboard

Swimming and relaxing in
glorious sunshine

Fishing — Boats or from
land is at its very best



**CHEERS from the CHAMPS from
the Resort of the Stars**



You're in good company always — Famous stars in the world of sports, entertainment prefer the luxury, genuine hospitality, and fine service of The Sir John.

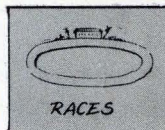
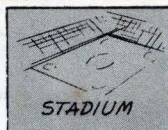
Everything for "Happy Hearts" and "Shutterbugs" is fully planned for your package tours.



You'll want to find out about our famous package tours. Everything we know you'll enjoy is planned for you. There are special tours all year 'round.

When you're ready for sightseeing, the Sir John Express Bus is ready to take you on a day of thrills and scenic beauty.

**\$10.00 DEPOSIT IS NECESSARY TO CONFIRM
ANY RESERVATION.**

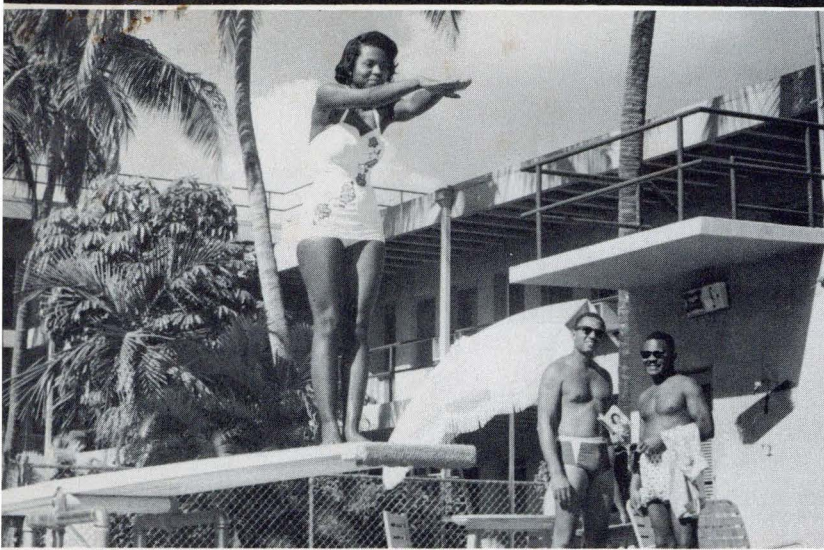


SIR JOHN HOTEL

276 N. W. 6th STREET

PHONE FR 3-3381

MIAMI, FLORIDA



Official City of Miami
Invitation as seen in
EBONY

GREATER **MIAMI** FOR A GREATER VACATION

Things to do . . . Places to go!

Whatever you like, you'll find
in this greatest of all resort areas . . .
excellent hotels and motels,
private pools and spacious beaches,
golf, sightseeing, water sports,
night life . . . name it, and Presto!

For more detailed information, write:
the CITY OF MIAMI
Dept. W-13, 320 N.E. 5th St., Miami, Fla.



MIAMI
*Welcomes You
to Enjoy the Best
VACATION or
CONVENTION
of Your Life*

THE **SIR JOHN** RESORT HOTEL-

Pictured in the top photo of this
Advertisement in EBONY—Invites you
to join in Year 'round Fun and Relaxation

Here's Some of the Thrilling Activities Greater Miami Offers You.

Shopping	Boating	Horse Racing	Sightseeing:
Nite Clubs	Fishing	Water Skiing	Seaquarium
Beaches	Golf	Baseball	Monkey Jungle
Swimming	Football	Dog Racing	Parrot Jungle
			Serpentarium

For Further Details,
Write: (Dept. S1)

The **SIR JOHN** Resort Hotel

267 N. W. 6th Street
MIAMI, FLORIDA
Phone FR 3-3381

10 West 135th Street
New York 37, N. Y.

7 April 1960

Dear Miss Wright:

Below are answers to the questions posed in your letter of 1 April.

1. I understand that the New York Post of 15 March 1958 reported that "only some 20 per cent of the merchants and store managers are Negroes." I called the New York Post and was told that they ran a series of articles on Harlem from 3 - 15 March 1958 but one would have to come down to their office to check the newspapers; they keep back copies for one year only. I will check this figure further but I wanted to get the other information off to you.

2. There is a Frederick Douglass bookshop at 141 West 125th Street.

3. A better picture of the Harlem rent situation would have a wider margin -- \$10-\$40 per room; the lower figure for controlled rentals; the higher for new luxury-type apartments. However, a large section of people living in Harlem and on the fringes pay \$25 to \$35 a week for furnished one-room apartments with cooking privileges, very often sharing a bathroom. The newcomers from the South and Puerto Rico are the special victims of these exorbitant rentals.

4. Yes, the Sugar Cane Club was owned by Edwin Smalls of Smalls' Paradise.

5. An article in the New York Times of 7 November 1937 says the "Big Apple" originated in Charleston, S. C. but was introduced to N.Y. at the Savoy. The "Lindy Hop" was created at the Savoy (soon after Lindbergh made his transatlantic flight /hop/ in 1927). See Life Magazine, 23 August 1943.

6. Yes, the Savoy was razed to make room for Delano Village. An article about the razing of the Savoy appeared in the New York Times in the early autumn of 1958 and in other newspapers.

7. The James Baldwin review of Selected Poems of Langston Hughes appeared in the New York Times Book Review Section, Sunday, 29 March 1959, p. 6.

Miss Wright

7 April 1960

- 2 -

8. Yes, there is a young Negro writer named William Branch, whose dramatization of Peter Abrahams' A Wreath for Udomo is now playing at Karamu House in Cleveland. Mr. Branch won the Sherwood Award in 1958 for a TV drama, "Light in the Southern Sky."

9. From what could be found at the Schomburg Collection, I would use the figure 3,436 Negroes lynched between 1882-1931, taken from Negro Year Book; an Annual Encyclopedia of the Negro 1931-1932, p.293, Monroe Work, ed., Tuskegee Institute, Alabama.

10. I enclose a copy of the "Law Against Discrimination" of the State of New York. Note particularly p. 7, article 2.

I hope these answers are sufficient verification. If I can be of any further help, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Ruth Jett

Miss Frances Wright
Holiday
Independence Square
Philadelphia 5, Pennsylvania

7 April 1960

Dear Peter:

The enclosed is a copy of the letter I sent to Miss Wright
at Holiday.

12 May 1960

Dear Peter,

As you can see I had good intentions about getting a note off to you for over a month, but you know about good intentions. My life is almost as hectic as yours and I don't accomplish anything of lasting significance as you.

As you can further see the questions Holiday wanted confirmed were not too significant. What is important is that the article is appearing. We look forward to it very much.

My boss, Miss Mary Sedge, Head Librarian at the Carnegie Endowment, will be vacationing in Jamaica for three weeks (mainly on the North Coast). I've asked her to call you to say hello if she spends any time in Kingston. She's just read

at the Montego Beach Hotel - Montego Bay, - 2 -
May 16-20; The Town Isl. - May 21
until the
30th
possibly
and then
she'll
decide
how many
days in
Kingdom.

your book for background on the island. She is
a bit shy so I doubt that you'll hear from her
but I thought you should know should she call.
She just might change her mind and want
to see the University College set up, and she's a delightful person.

Sylvia is having some people in next week to meet
Vic Reid. I missed him at Dorothy's last
Saturday.

I just returned Return to Goli to the
Coutee Cullen Library. I wish the world had
listened to you eight years ago. I also wish
somebody here would push your books. It seems
to me that Knopf would & should want to bring
them out in paperback and do a real promotional
campaign. My sister says she should have
been born rich instead of good looking. I say I
should have been born rich instead of wishful.

Love to Daphne, the children and you.

Hastily
Ruth

March 31, 1959

Mr. Peter Abrahams,
c.o HOLIDAY,
Independence Square,
Philadelphia 5,
Pa.

Dear Sir:

Having read your very interesting article in the April issue of HOLIDAY, we thought you might be able to offer an explanation for the following:

My brother and I spent three months in East and South Africa in the spring of 1958 and during our stay there my brother had six almost identical experiences.

At our approach a black man (we are white) coming in the opposite direction would stop abruptly at sight of my brother, his eyes would widen and he would stare as if under some sort of hypnotic spell. (No one ever, anywhere, even seemed to be conscious of MY presence.)

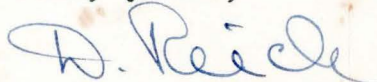
On the dock in Capetown the man "effected" drew his long stemmed pipe from his mouth with the mechanical movement of an automaton, and as we passed him he "stabbed" my brother's face with the pipe stem. On the main street of Port Elizabeth the fellow turned as we passed and followed directly behind my brother for blocks - we had to enter a shop to shake him. The same thing occurred on West Street in Durban, and again in Beira in Mozambique.

In the interior of Zanzibar at a tribal dance we came upon quite by accident and again in the native market in Mombasa the incidents took on more serious character. In each of these cases the black man drew a knife and attacked. Fortunately my brother was saved from injury by other blacks coming to his rescue in the nick of time.

One such incident we would have assumed accidental. Two we might have considered coincidence. But six - ? And in six different places stretching all the way from Mombasa to Capetown?

We would certainly appreciate any light you might be able to shed on these experiences.

Very truly yours,



D. Reich
305 Lafayette Street
Watertown, Wisconsin