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Maine Writers Correspondence

Maine State Library Special Collections

10-31-2014

E.B. White Correspondence

E.B. (Elwyn Brooks) White 1899-1985

Hilda McLeod Jacob

Maine State Library

Theresa C. Stuart 1885-1965

Maine State Library

Katharine Sergeant Angell White 1892-1977

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WHITE, Elwin Brooks

Born at Mount Vernon, New York, July 11, 1899

Resident of North Brooklin, Maine

White, Elwin Brooks, writer; b. Mount Vernon, N. Y., July 11, 1899; s. Samuel Tilly and Fessie (Hart) W.; A. B., Cornell U., 1921; m. Katharine Serceant Angell, Nov. 13, 1921; 1 son, Joel McCoun. Began as reporter, 1921; later free lance writer and contbg. editor New Yorker Magazine (now editorial writer and contbr.). Served as pvt. U.S. Army, 1918. Mem. Phi Gamma Delta. Author: The Lady Is Cold(poems), 1929; Is Sex Necessary?, (with J. Thurber), 1929; Every Day Is Saturaday, 1934; The Fox of Peapack, 1939; Quo Vadimus, 1939. Editor: Ho Hum, 1931; Another Ho Hum, 1932; A Subtreasury of American Humor (with Katharine S. White), 1941. Home: North Brooklin, Maine. Office: 25 W. 43rd St., New York, N. Y.

WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA, volume 22,
1942-1943

August 10, 1942

Mr. E. B. White
North Brooklin
Maine

Dear Mr. White:

Among libraries which boast of having ONE MAN'S MEAT, we are not lacking. Our copies are seldom, however, in the library, enjoying as they do such a constant demand. It is a delightful book, and readers should be grateful to you for the hours of enjoyment which ONE MAN'S MEAT provides.

We write particularly to acquaint you with the Maine Author Collection, an exhibit of over a thousand volumes, written by Maine natives or residents, inscribed and presented by them for this exhibit. The inscriptions in their individuality add greatly to the facination and value of the books. Another part of the collection is the file of information -- critical, biographical and photographic, as well as the correspondence which will be available to future research workers and students.

It is to be hoped that an inscribed copy of ONE MAN'S MEAT may be included in the Maine Author Collection. We should be grateful for your generous interest. You have our best wishes for a well-deserved continuance of the book's popularity.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hmj
Encl--1

SECRETARY

E. B. WHITE
NORTH BROOKLIN, MAINE

15 August 1942

Dear Mrs. Sackos -

I'll be glad to give
a copy of "One Man's Meat" for your
Maine Author collection. In sending
off a copy under separate cover,
with an inscription.

Sincerely,

E. B. White

August 19, 1942

Mr. E. B. White
North Brooklin
Maine

Dear Mr. White:

The inscribed copy of ONE MAN'S MEAT has been received, and we are of course charmed with the inscription. We re-read "Once More to the Lake" with added appreciation -- some of us live by lakes, and most of us know at least one fresh-water lake -- and we can see why you had to come back to Maine.

You have accomplished a fine piece of work in snaring the humor and integrity and beauty of the world around you and putting it into the kind of words that carry a reader along from the first page to the last with no abatement of interest.

Your generosity in making it possible to include ONE MAN'S MEAT in the Maine Author Collection is deeply appreciated; we send you our thanks, and also a cordial invitation to visit us should you happen to be in Augusta between "famine" seasons.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hmj
Encl--3¢ postal refund

SECRETARY

September 20, 1946

Mr. E. B. White
North Brooklin
Maine

Dear Mr. White:

Congratulations on THE WILD FLAG, to which we look forward with unusually keen anticipation, and which, from its advance notices, certainly sounds like the sort of book which needed to be written.

ONE MAN'S MEAT is in the Maine Author Collection. You will recall inscribing it charmingly and presenting it to this permanent exhibit. We have refrained from burdening you with additional requests, believing that perhaps we should mention this collection only when books undeniably Maine in background should appear.

A letter from Mrs. White to Miss Stuart, however, stoutly denied the tag "summer resident", and gave us courage! Perhaps you, too, are not averse to complete adoption? Nothing would give us greater pleasure than to adopt both you and Mrs. White and claim you as Maine authors.

If you share our enthusiasm for the idea, we hope you will want to inscribe a copy of THE WILD FLAG for the collection. We wish the classic, STUART LITTLE, were of Maine (though of course that's where he was heading, when he drove north!); but we console ourselves that the book is in our traveling libraries as well as a number of personal libraries which members of this staff took care of last Christmas! May Stuart go on forever. He very likely will.

And all good wishes to THE WILD FLAG.

Sincerely yours,

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

E. B. WHITE
NORTH BROOKLIN, MAINE

23 September 1946

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

I don't know whether THE WILD FLAG needed to get written. All I know is that it got written; and I hope you will like it.

As for my being a Maine author, I don't know what you would call me. There is nothing Maine about the background of THE WILD FLAG, which has for its background (and foreground) the whole round earth, of which Maine is undeniably a part. ~~Most of the~~ book was written here in Maine. I shall be glad to inscribe a copy for you if you want to include it in the collection.

Many thanks for your very kind letter and for what you said about Stuart Little. You are quite right that he was headed toward Maine when last seen.

Sincerely,

EB White

October 9, 1946

Mr. E. B. White
North Brooklin
Maine

Dear Mr. White:

Your very kind letter cheers us immensely, and we frankly and proudly admit that nothing would give us greater pleasure than to be permitted to claim you as a Maine author. It will be a happy occasion to place THE WILD FLAG beside ONE MAN'S MEAT -- and who knows but what the charming Stuart may also one day rest there?

THE WILD FLAG will of course be purchased for lending, and it will be therefore not only in the Maine Author Collection, but also in the section of the library which serves patrons all over the state. We look forward to its publication, and wish it well.

Sincerely yours,

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

November 20, 1946

Mr. E. B. White
North Brooklin
Maine

Dear Mr. White:

There may be more profound books, there are indubitably much much longer books, and there are even books written by "experts," but we suspect that THE WILD FLAG will bruit a lot of good sense into the minds of countless readers in a pleasant, painless form. Your wisdom is wrapped in wit, and is perhaps the more effective for that.

The inscription in the Maine Author Collection copy of THE WILD FLAG pleases us, and we are most appreciative of your generous interest. Please accept our thanks, and our good wishes for the success of the new book.

Sincerely yours,

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

New Classic From E. B.

7/12/70

WHITE

THE TRUMPET OF THE SWAN, by E. B. White, Harper & Row. 210 pages. \$4.50.

EVERYONE who enjoyed "Charlotte's Web" and "Stuart Little" — and they must number multitudes across the world — will delight in E. B. White's new book about Louis, the trumpeter swan born without a voice.

These 210 pages are a wealth of delight, whimsy, fantasy, humor, each blessed with the grace, clarity and simplicity of E. B. White's immaculate prose style.

We have one quarrel, however, with the publisher. The dust jacket, and sticker proclaiming this to be a 1970 Honor Book in the Childrens Spring Festival discriminates against adults. No matter whether you are aged six, or 16 or 60, the chances are you will find delight in "The Trumpet Of The Swan."

Mainers should take special delight and pride in knowing that E. B. White wrote this book in Maine, at his home in Brooklin.

The story involves 11-year-old Sam Beaver, who, while camping out in Western Canada with his father, discovers a pair of trumpeter swans nesting on a remote lake. Before his astonished eyes, the female hatched her little trumpeters.

One cygnet, Louis, is born without a voice . . . a trumpeter swan without a trumpet! To make up for nature's mistake, voiceless Louis decided he should learn to read and write, so off he flies to school with his friend Sam. After mastering reading and writing with a slate pencil upon a small blackboard, Louis wings his way home to his Trumpeter Swan family in Red Rocks Lake, Montana. Around his long neck he carries his blackboard and chalk pencil, but no other swans can understand what he writes.

Serena, the beautiful female swan with whom Louis falls in love, especially has no idea of the love in Louis's heart. Being dumb, Louis cannot trumpet his love, calling 'Ko-hoh!', as a trumpeter swan should.

So Louis' father decides to fly off to Billings, Mon., to rob a music store and bring home a man-made trumpet for his son.

Louis becomes so expert on the man-made trumpet that he gets a series of jobs, first at a camp blowing reveille, mess calls and taps. He next lands a job in the Public Gardens at Boston, leading the swan boat and blowing tunes and arias on his trumpet. Boston is enthralled; record crowds flock to the lake and Louis becomes so great a celebrity that he stays at the Ritz Carlton, where he orders watercress sandwiches sent to him by room service.

Louis's next engagement is at \$500 a week, playing at a nightclub in Philadelphia and living at the zoo. One stormy day a badly buffeted trumpeter swan finds refuge from the storm by landing on the lake at the zoo. The swan is Louis' first love, Serena.

This time Louis serenades her with his



trumpet and off they fly together to Montana, where Louis turns over to his father almost \$4,500, earned from his career as trumpeter swan.

The story is beguiling and charming, as White's tales always are, the prose as lucid and clear as the water of a wilderness lake. And as the story of Louis' adventures unfold it is entrancingly interlaced with the lore of wildlife and nature, and with the elfin laughter and joy which is E. B. White's hallmark.

Bill Caldwell

