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# Clarence I. Chatto Correspondence

Clarence Irving Chatto 1886-1975

Hilda McLeod Jacob  
*Maine State Library*

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CHATTO, Clarence I.

b. Sargentville, August 7, 1886  
see Bates Alumnus summer 1945.

# Bates Man Is Co-Author of Book On Springfield, Mass. Program Of Education for Citizenship

By MARION COOPER

Since the United States has participated in winning a global war and looks toward years of peace and prosperity, all eyes turn toward improvement of conditions at home, in both economic and social affairs. Mindful of the fact that a successful nation must have understanding within its own borders, Americans everywhere are intent on developing a spirit of understanding and appreciation among the many nationalities gathered together in this country.

Because it is understood that any feeling of unity must be instilled at an early age, efforts have been made in the public schools for many years to teach the melting pot theory to the youth of America. However, it has taken Springfield, Mass. educators to establish a practical working plan whereby boys and girls of various nationalities learn to live together in peace and mutual appreciation without any self-conscious ideas of tolerance or condescension.

The Springfield Plan has been in operation long enough to show some definite results, and this Fall a book on the subject, "The Story of the Springfield Plan," has made its appearance, published by Barnes and Noble Inc. of New York.

Authors of the book are Clarence I. Chatto, graduate of Bates College and principal of Classical High School, Springfield, and Alice Haligan, director of adult education in the same school system.

Attractively arranged and illustrated, the study gives a clearcut, intelligent explanation of one community's total war against prejudice which should be required reading in all school systems throughout the country.

#### Average City

Typifying Springfield as an average American industrial city with a background of independent thought and action, the authors set out to describe the plan followed in the public schools which strives to make the children proud of their national backgrounds, appreciative of the additions to their culture contributed by neighbors with different ancestors, while they are constantly aware that they themselves are all Americans.

Working on the theory that democracy must be practiced throughout the system, the Springfield educators have started with establishment of a representative group of teachers. Putting into practice throughout the school system, the same principles of democracy which the schools are trying to inculcate, the authorities has made it possible for each teacher to exercise initiative and to experiment within the bounds of broad established policies. Each teacher, as well as each student, has the opportunity to become a leader by virtue of his accomplishments and to develop his abilities to the utmost for his own self-improvement and the common good.



CLARENCE I. CHATTO, graduate of Bates College in 1912 and co-author of "The Story of the Springfield Plan."

#### No Prejudices

First problem, the authorities found, was to convince applicants, teachers and citizens that a teacher with ability might aspire to any position in the system regardless of where his parents were born and regardless of how he spent his Sundays. As a result, today in Springfield, Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish supervisors, principals, teachers and students together plan courses and procedures in the public schools and together put their planning into effect. White and Negro students, teachers and employees work together toward goals which they themselves have helped to establish.

Living and learning together is the first aim of the elementary schools in Springfield, where from the kindergarten on the children are placed in natural situations in which they associate with children of all groups.

#### "I'm an American"

The authors quote from a fourth grade experience when a visitor commented on the various nationalities gathered in one room. At the suggestion of the teacher, the children recited the native lands of their parents and grandparents. One small boy, explaining that his father and mother had both come from Russia, hastened to add, "I'm not a Russian. I'm an American."

In the effort to translate the ideals of democracy into daily living, the children are encouraged to hold committee meetings, discuss school matters and form opinions that will be applied to settlement of classroom problems. Good neighbor policies are discussed and put into practice and the children come to realize that they must be good neighbors to businessmen and home dwellers in their immediate vicinities.

#### Hope for Future

The authors recognize that although the children discuss in committee the necessities for living together amicably that the millenium is not achieved overnight. Neighborhood incidents continue to occur, but there have been enough examples of the children applying the principles they have learned in school to encourage their instructors about the future.

#### A map fair, a joint observation of

Christmas and Chanukah are two of the ways in which the children have been encouraged to learn about and appreciate each other.

#### Learn from Others

As the children reach junior high school their social studies are built about the different nationalities that have helped make America what it is. Foreign language groups in the city are sought out for information about their native lands and children are encouraged to write their school compositions in English and then in the language of the country where their parents originated, the whole being later gathered together in a volume that is highly prized in the school where it was prepared.

#### Newspaper Reading

How to read a daily newspaper and evaluate its contents in an important part of the work, while the children are encouraged to discuss race prejudice and are taught to realize it does not exist in their school life.

High school groups hold town meetings where they discuss school affairs and their own connections with the community.

Since every American realizes that democracy cannot succeed unless there is an intelligent, well-informed citizenry to carry it forward, the Springfield boys and girls have a sound appreciation as the basic studies they are offered. In these routine subjects, the same principles are used and children study global geography by studying their neighbors; increase their foreign language knowledge by corresponding with boys and girls in other lands, and utilize their vocational training for their share in school activities, such as building necessary equipment, keeping books for school organizations and other similar projects.

A close relationship between school and community has furthered education for democratic living in Springfield.

#### Jobs Without Prejudice

Each school has a placement bureau and strives to place the best suited student in each position offered. If the bureau encounters race or religious prejudice, it attempts to straighten out the prospective employer and in most cases is able to place the student even if his background has not been that specified in the original request.

Adult education, which has developed rapidly in Springfield, includes forums and evening classes, planned to aid everyone from the new citizen to the college graduate.

As the program changes from year to year, it is the primary objective to integrate all parts of the community, for without that the results will be superficial, the authorities believe.

Through advance study, exchange of positions with teachers in other parts of the country and Summer work in the community's industrial projects, the Springfield teachers are striving constantly to better prepare themselves to carry on this program for democracy in their classes.

#### **Still Early**

While the promoters of the plan and the authors of "The Story of the Springfield Plan" know it is too early yet to place a definite finger on the success of their educational set-up, they are looking forward to more changes which they feel will lead in the end to a better educated, more understanding citizenry in a democratic United States.

The final chapter in the book by Mr. Chatto and Miss Halligan is composed of material that has been useful in setting up the program in Springfield and which should help other educators to get similar projects underway in other United States cities and towns.

#### **Native of Sargentville**

Clarence Chatto, co-author of "The Story of the Springfield Plan," is a native of Sargentville and attended Bluehill-George Stevens Academy. He was graduated from Bates College in 1912 and received

his master's degree from Harvard in 1923. He has served as principal of high schools at Island Falls, and Orono. He headed the English department in the Danvers, Mass. high school and after five years as teacher of journalism, debating and English at Fall River, went to Springfield where he was head of the English department in the High School of Commerce for 17 years.

In 1929 Mr. Chatto was instrumental in founding the Western Massachusetts League of School Publications, which after 15 years is still one of the most active school press associations in New England. In 1943 he was appointed curriculum specialist in the Springfield school system and last July was named principal of the Classical High School there.

While Mr. Chatto's association with the work on development of a program of education for citizenship has been brief, it has been interested and productive. He has lectured at length on the Springfield Plan, appearing at educational conferences from one end of the country to the other.

#### **Interest Nationwide**

It has been his experience that interest in education for better human relations is nationwide. In Springfield, he has been active in coordinating the program at all school levels and in developing the study units for the high school, specifically the high school town meeting unit and interpretation of the daily papers.

Mrs. Chatto, the former Lillian Stone, is a native of Brunswick and a relative of Madam Nordica for whom she was named.

October 11, 1945

Mr. Clarence I. Chatto  
c/o Barnes & Noble, Inc.  
105 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Chatto:

THE STORY OF THE SPRINGFIELD PLAN has been in the library since immediately after publication, and we find it of tremendous interest and value. It would be more correct to say the book is owned by the library: it is seldom "in", being in such demand by our patrons! You are to be congratulated upon this work.

It is always a pleasure to welcome a new Maine author, and especially is that true in your case. We believe that you may be interested to know of the Maine Author Collection, which includes about fifteen hundred books written by Maine people, inscribed and presented, forming a permanent exhibit here. It is the only place where all the books of all Maine authors are gathered together, constantly available to visitors and students, and assured of permanent preservation. The inscriptions are an outstanding feature, ranging from pen-and-ink sketches to tributes to the state; sometimes the author writes an autobiographical paragraph, or an incident in connection with the writing of the book; but whatever the inscription, it is always original and lends distinction to the volume.

We hope that you may want to inscribe and present a copy of your excellent STORY OF THE SPRINGFIELD PLAN to the Maine Author Collection. It would give us a great deal of pleasure to add this fine book to the shelves. Please accept our best wishes for the book, and our cordial invitation to call at the library and see the exhibit when you are in Maine.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of  
Maine Author Collection

hmj

March 26, 1946

Mr. Clarence I. Chatto  
c/o Barnes & Noble, Inc.  
105 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Chatto:

Last October we wrote to you about THE STORY OF THE SPRINGFIELD PLAN, and the possibility of including an inscribed copy in the Maine Author Collection.

Fearing that the letter may not have reached you, we are enclosing a copy. The omission of so outstanding a book from this collection is regrettable, and we continue to hope that you may want to share our pride in the inclusion of THE STORY OF THE SPRINGFIELD PLAN in this exhibit.

If your vacation plans bring you in this direction, would you pause at Augusta, and give us the pleasure of a visit from you?

Sincerely yours

hmj  
Encls.

In Charge of  
Maine Author Collection

October 15, 1946

Mr. Clarence I. Chatto  
c/o Barnes & Noble, Inc.  
105 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Chatto:

Will you forgive us for seeming persistent?

It is because the Maine Author Collection is the only place where all the books of all Maine authors are gathered and permanently preserved. We deplore the omission of your fine book, *THE STORY OF THE SPRINGFIELD PLAN*, not alone on its own worthy account, but also because you are a Maine man.

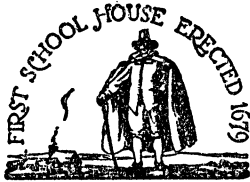
Perhaps our earlier letters did not make quite clear that this collection has been growing for about a quarter of a century, and is outstanding for its scope and variety. All the books of Maine's first novelist, Madam Wood, are here; visitors and students find Longfellow, Jacob Abbott, Elijah Kellogg, Joseph Holt Ingraham. Here also are the books of Holman Day, Rufus M. Jones, Kenneth Roberts, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Robert P. Tristram Coffin. The old and the new; austere treatises and children's stories; history, religion, cook books, philosophy, biography, travel -- all are in the collection. All are valuable; all are distinguished by the original touch of inscriptions; and all are by Maine people.

You may understand why we are saddened that *THE STORY OF THE SPRINGFIELD PLAN* is not in the collection. We hope you may want to inscribe a copy, and enjoy with us the pride of having your book with these other works of Maine's sons and daughters. May we continue to anticipate this happy possibility?

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of  
Maine Author Collection



The PUBLIC SCHOOLS of SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS  
Classical High School

July 28, 1947

Mrs. F. W. Jacobs  
Maine State Library  
State House  
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacobs:

I appreciate greatly your desire to have a copy of "The Story of the Springfield Plan" in the State Library. You have been very patient and gracious in asking for it tactfully, not once but several times. My only excuse for not attending to this before is that I am personally very proud to have such a distinction and that the tremendous pressure on school principals in these post war years has led me to put personal things by.

Months ago the publishers furnished me with a copy of the book. I am indeed happy to send it to you and I hope that it may not be too late to have a place in the Maine collection.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clarence I. Chittenden". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name of the principal.

Principal

CIC/jc



August 4, 1947

Mr. Clarence I. Chatto, Principal  
Classical High School  
Springfield, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Chatto:

It gives us a great deal of pleasure to acknowledge the arrival of THE STORY OF THE SPRINGFIELD PLAN for the Maine Author Collection, to read the inscribed tribute to the State of Maine, and to know that you are interested in this collection.

No, indeed, it is never too late for a book to be placed on these shelves. The collection will, we trust, continue to grow for years and years. When we can add such an outstanding book as yours, a definite, practical contribution to a better world, we are not only glad: we are proud.

Please accept our thanks, and our repeated congratulations.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of  
Maine Author Collection

hmj