

September 2015

Rev. Sheldon Christian Correspondence

Sheldon Christian 1907-1997

Hilda McLeod
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CHRISTIAN, SHELDON

Jutland, Denmark, January 1, 1907 -

February 17, 1936

Sheldon Christian
Brunswick
Maine

Dear Mr. Christian:

We have noticed with pleasure your poems in the recent anthology, MAINE AND VERMONT POETS.

We find that we lack biographical information concerning you. Would you be so kind as to send us a brief biographical sketch? We would also like to know what writings have been published.

Please accept our congratulations upon your achievement, and our best wishes for future success.

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

lm

Secretary

Sheldon Christian

141 Maine Street, Brunswick, Maine

Biographical

Born January 1st, 1907, in Jutland, Denmark, during a visit of his parents abroad. Father, John Christian, partner in firm of Christian & Sweger, dealing in lumber and millwork, at 4028-4044 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. Failed in business, however, about 1909, and brought family to Somerville, Mass. In 1914, father died, leaving mother with seven children, oldest being only 14. Sheldon next to the youngest, aged 7. Brought up in Somerville, attending Somerville schools. At 14, went to work, and was employed as messenger in Atlas Shoe Company, Atlantic Avenue, Boston; as office boy, Ford Motor Company of Cambridge, Mass.; as messenger and packer at Little, Brown & Company, publishers, at 34 Beacon Street, Boston, for two years; and as messenger and office boy at Wise, Hobbs, & Arnold, brokers, at 15 Congress Street, Boston. At 18, determined to return to school. Tutored privately and entered high school at 18. Graduated, 1927. Entered Tufts College School of Liberal Arts, 1927. Graduated with honors in English, 1931. Entered School of Religion at Tufts College, 1931, graduated, 1933. Now settled at Brunswick, Maine. Wife is Dr. Cora E. Barden, osteopathic physician, whom he married on May 6th, 1934. Wife has practiced in Brunswick for almost ten years; graduate of Massachusetts College of Osteopathy. Mr. Christian's honors in college: editor of college literary magazine, THE TUFTONIAN, 1930-1931. Edited, and co-published, with Lawrence Carra, then student at Harvard and now doing graduate work in University Theatre at Yale University, anthology, THIRTY YEARS OF TUFTS VERSE. Won first prize in Goddard Prize Readings, open to entire college, two successive years, the second year, winning in same week also, first prize in Greenwood Prize Readings, open to students of the School of Religion only. Had play published in play anthology (as below), only student from a New England college represented. Won first prize in college verse anthology also (see below). Active in drama interests at college; made honorary member of Poetry Society.

Literary

One-time co-American editor of the BEACON, published at Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, British West Indies. Editor of TUFTONIAN, 1930-1931, at Tufts College. Contributing editor to POETRY WORLD, 1932-1934. Edited THIRTY YEARS OF TUFTS VERSE, as above, an anthology.

POETRY published in following periodicals: ADELPHI (London); POETRY WORLD; THE BEACON (B.W.I.); UNITY (edited by John Haynes Holmes); POETRY OF TODAY, etc.

POETRY in following anthologies: THIRTY YEARS OF TUFTS VERSE (1931); CAP AND GOWN: Fourth Series (1931); AMERICAN COLLEGE VERSE (won first prize; 107 students from 72 colleges competing) -- (1932); MODERN AMERICAN POETRY: 1935; MAINE AND VERMONT POETS: 1935.

PLAYS -- published:

- "Puppets: of Two Who Fell at Gettysburg," published in ALL AMERICAN UNIVERSITY ONE-ACT PLAYS. Eldridge Entertain House, Inc. 1
- "Antilochus and Ilythia", one-act drama published in TUFTONIAN, June, 1933.

PLAYS -- produced, not yet published:

- "All the World's A Stage," a one-act farce. Twice produced at Tufts College.
- "The Everlasting Presence," a one-act modern miracle-play. Produced in 1932 at the Congregational Church, Gloucester, Mass.
- "The Birth in the Cave," Christmas episodic drama produced in the First Universalist Church, Brunswick, Maine, 1935.
- "The Passion of Jesus," modern passion-play, without Christus on stage, produced April 5th, at First Universalist Church, Brunswick, Maine, 1936.

PLAYS -- neither produced nor published:

- "Visvantara," a drama in one act.
- "Pontiac", full-length drama.
- "The Tower of the Seven Stories," full-length drama; episodic.
- "George Washington," an episodic drama in 22 scenes; written for Civic Theatre of Somerville, Mass., but never produced.
- "The Portrait," a semi-pantomime in three scenes, one act.
- "Everyman," a modernization of the ancient morality-play.

Miscellaneous

Author of upwards of a dozen illustrated lectures on the Drama and the Theatre. Author of several published short stories, latest of which appeared in THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY, 1935 ("The Duel"). Author of numerous published homiletical pieces, in The Christian Leader, Unity (John Haynes Holmes, editor), etc. Author of numerous unpublished song and hymn tunes, and several texts. Text, "Lightnin'," set to music by Prof. Leo Rich Lewis of Tufts College Department of Music, introduced by Apollo Club of Boston, 1934. Other texts being set to music by Prof. Lewis, in preparation. Author of numerous illustrated lectures on religious and other topics, including "The Vision of Dante Alighieri," "The Lives of the Apostles," "St. Francis of Assisi," "The Life of St. Paul," "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam," etc., etc.

April 8, 1936

Dr. Sheldon Christian
141 Maine Street
Brunswick, Maine



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Your interest and assistance is
sincerely appreciated, and we trust
you will call at the library, should
you at any time be in Augusta.

Very truly yours
Maine State Library

Secretary

in

April 8, 1936

Dr. Sheldon Christian
141 Maine Street
Brunswick, Maine

Dear Dr. Christian:

Thank you for your kindness in supplying us with a biographical sketch and also a photograph. This information is being filed for future reference.

We do hope some day you will collect your many poems and publish them in one volume under your name; and we also hope that we may be fortunate in having a copy for the Maine Author Collection.

Your interest and assistance is sincerely appreciated, and we trust you will call at the library, should you at any time be in Augusta.

Very truly yours
Maine State Library

lm

Secretary

April 30, 1937

Rev. Sheldon Christian
141 Maine Street
Brunswick, Maine

Dear Mr. Christian:

We have received the inscribed copy of
125 YEARS OF RELIGIOUS PIONEERING, which you
so kindly presented to the Maine Author
Collection.

We are especially pleased to add this
little book, with its valuable account of
the history of your church, to the collection.
Please accept our thanks for your generosity,
and our congratulations upon such an attractive
and readable booklet.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

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SECRETARY

May 18, 1937

Rev. Sheldon Christian
141 Main Street
Brunswick, Maine

Dear Mr. Christian:

THE UNBEAUTIFUL SPEAR has reached the library. It seems superfluous for us to attempt expression of our appreciation in the usual words. This poem is so simply, so strongly, written, and carries as its reproach the power of gentleness and sympathy, that we feel our thanks should be expressed in the same manner.

It is a poem which we are proud to claim as the work of a Maine author. We hope it will receive the circulation and attention which it merits. Please accept our congratulations upon writing a very arresting denouncement of "the unbeautiful spear."

And please accept our sincere thanks for this gift to the Maine Author Collection. Sometime when you are in Augusta, we hope you will call at the Library. We should enjoy meeting the author of this work, and we also would like to have it autographed.

We enclose three cents as a refund on the postage which was necessary to mail the booklet.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

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SECRETARY

December 22, 1948

Rev. Sheldon Christian
Brunswick
Maine

Dear Mr. Christian:

The copy of OUR LADY'S TUMBLER was received this morning, and it is a lovely booklet, to view and to read. We shall place it in the Maine Author Collection, we believe, and we thank you for remembering us with a copy.

Our warm holiday greetings to you.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

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