

September 2015

George Arthur Merrill Correspondence

George Arthur Merrill 1866-1944

Hilda McLeod
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MERRIL, GEORGE ARTHUR

b. Portland, Maine, September 9, 1866.

Born: Portland, Maine, Sept., 9, 1866.
Son: Henry Franklin and Aurelia Maria (Grant) Merrill;
Descendant in 10th generation from Nathaniel
Merrill of Newbury, Mass., 1635.
Preparatory education: Boys' High School, San Francisco.
B.S. from University of California, 1888.
Post-graduate study, same University, 1893-94.
Married: Sarah Elizabeth McKie, of San Diego, Calif.
June 11, 1895.
Children: Grant, Aurelia Marie (Mrs. C. E. Peavey),
Ernest Nathaniel.

Began as teacher of science, Cogswell Polytechnical
College, San Francisco, 1888; became head of depart-
ment, 1889, vice prin. 1891, prin. 1892-93; pres.
California School of Mechanic Arts since 1894, Wil-
merding School of Industrial Arts since 1900, Lux
School of Industrial Training since 1912, Dey En-
dowment since 1925 -- All constituting one institution.
.Mayor of Redwood City, 1908-18. Member and officer
in several organizations. Unitarian. Author.

from--WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA,
1936-1937.



February 25, 1938

Mr. George A. Merrill
141 Wellesley Crescent
Redwood City, California

Dear Mr. Merrill:

To learn that you are writing an analytical, interpretative study of manual training and industrial elements in American education is indeed interesting, and we are eager to see the completed volume.

We regret that your books are not as yet included in the Maine Author Collection. Perhaps you do not know about this project? It was started some years ago, and now numbers several hundred volumes, all written by Maine persons, and most of them inscribed presentation copies. We have found our Maine authors exceedingly generous and interested in this exhibit, and we are of course grateful for this, for the success of the collection depends to a large extent upon our writers.

We maintain a biographical file, also, in which we gather all available information regarding Maine writers, and all correspondence is filed in special volumes. It can be readily comprehended what a vast and priceless source of research material on Maine's contribution to literature will be afforded in future years by this collection, and we therefore bend every effort to make it as complete as possible.

Perhaps sometime you may want to inscribe copies of your books for this purpose. Such a generous gift would be deeply appreciated, and meanwhile, we offer our best wishes for the success of the new book.

Very truly yours

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BY

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SAN FRANCISCO

March 10, 1938.

Miss Hilda McLeod,
Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine.

My dear Miss McLeod:

In compliance with your request of February 25 I will send to you under separate cover autographed copies of some of the books which I have written.

As I cannot find a copy of the first edition of the Laboratory Manual of Physical Measurements, I am sending a copy of the second edition, in which one of our teachers, Miss Caroline W. Baldwin, participated. The copy which I am sending to you is described as Part I of an Introductory Course of Physical Measurements. Part II covered Electrical Measurements and I find that it was credited to Miss Baldwin alone. I had prepared an earlier edition, but it seemed better to let her publish the later edition in her own name. I cannot find a copy of the first edition of it.

The Textbook of Theoretical Mechanics, which I am sending was copyrighted in 1905. There was an earlier edition printed in 1897, which was not copyrighted. It was necessary for me to write all of those books for the reason that the character of our courses of instruction was so very different from anything to be found elsewhere at that time.

During the past ten years we have been readjusting our courses of instruction to meet changing needs of the schools, particularly in their relation to the industries. I have prepared in mimeographed form what will be printed under the title of a "Foundation Algebra". There will also be a new course of Physical Measurements, but it will be in the nature of a textbook as well as a laboratory manual.

I am also preparing a textbook of meteorology, because so many of our students are looking forward to careers in aeronautics, forestry, Coast Guard service, air conditioning, etc. Prof. Donald S. Piston of the University of Maine has prepared an excellent book on meteorology, but it doesn't quite meet the needs of young men who are going directly into the industries with only high-school or junior-college backgrounds, based on high-school mathematics.

I am planning to end my administrative career on June 30, 1939 and immediately thereafter shall begin to put these new publications into printed form, feeling that we now have a sufficiently clear idea as to what the needs of our students will be in those directions during the next fifteen or twenty years. Will send to you copies of any that may be issued.

Miss Hilda McLeod,

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March 10, 1938.

As to magazine articles, I have never preserved or collected them, so cannot even give you references to them. However, there are two publications having special reference to some of my writings. Two recent references are as follows: Eells' "The Junior College", Houghton-Mifflin & Co., pp. 663-64; Bunker's "The Junior High School", Roberts Co., pp. 33, 35-38, 39.

Prof. John M. Brewer, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University, is now preparing a history of vocational guidance and counselling, which will make reference to our pioneering in that field.

With the books, I am sending you a copy of an unprinted thesis by Robert Locke Cooke, entitled, "Some Contributions of the Lick and Wilmerding Schools of San Francisco to the Administration of Vocational and Secondary Education", which was submitted to the University of California in 1930.

In September 1936 our graduates asked me to write a history of industrial education in-so-far as I had anything to do with it. I managed to complete the first chapter of it, and will send a copy of it with the other material. They also presented me with three huge volumes, one of them containing such of my writings as they were able to gather without my knowledge. (It was a 70th birthday surprise party.) Whenever I can get around to it, I will add to their collection such of my writings as I may be able to find, and may be able to send a list of them to you.

At the same time, the graduates incorporated at the California State Capitol a George A. Merrill Tribute Fund, which is intended to be a medium through which the graduates may make any contributions or bequests they may see fit to make for the perpetuation of our work. Within the past few weeks one of them has set the pace by donating a new auditorium, construction of which we hope to begin the first of next May.

All my ancestral lines date back to the first settlers of New England. Copies of my charts are filed with the Maine Historical Society, Mass. Hist & Gen. Soc., and California Geneological Society.

Further biographical references:

Who's Who in America, Vol. 14
Who's Who in American Education, Vol. 1
Who's Who Among North American Authors, Vol. IV
Compendium of American Genealogy, Vol. IV
Cyclopedia of American Biography (in press, 1938)

I am also sending herewith a photograph for which the Trustees of the Lux School asked me to sit, last October.

Very cordially,

Geo. A. Merrill
Geo. A. Merrill.

April 13, 1938

Mr. George A. Merrill
2250 Seventeenth Street
San Francisco, California

Dear Mr. Merrill:

Your kindness and interest in the Maine Author Collection is deeply appreciated. We are delighted with the splendid material which you sent, and count ourselves particularly fortunate to have the photograph.

Certainly your life in retrospect must hold a vast amount of satisfaction, when the valuable contributions to study, made necessary by the advancing times, are considered. What a satisfaction to have viewed the successful growth and expansion of these schools with which you have been importantly connected; and to experience the recognition which is indeed merited, that your former students have tendered you. It gives us extreme pleasure to include you among the Maine authors, and we hope that when your administrative career is ended, and your publications are in printed form, as you suggest, we may receive inscribed copies for this exhibit collection.

Please accept our very sincere thanks for your generous gifts, and our best wishes for continued success.

Very truly yours

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