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Maine Writers Correspondence

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October 2015

Alfred Noyes Correspondence

Alfred Noyes 1880-1958

Helen Dean Fish
J.B. Lippincott Company

Hilda McLeod Jacob
Maine State Library

Maine State Library

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NOYES, Alfred

March 15, 1944

Mr. Alfred Noyes
c/o Frederick A. Stokes Company
443-449 Fourth Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Noyes:

Your enchanting book, THE SECRET OF POODUCK ISLAND, has captivated us completely. It is in the traveling libraries which reach children and grown-ups all over the state. The charm of story and illustrations is pervading, and we cannot conceive of a reader who will not happily succumb to this delightful small world of squirrel and sea with its wisdom and humor.

It pleases us, of course, to notice that Pooduck Island is in Maine, and that these friendly folk and their adventures are part of our state. Unfortunately, we realize that we cannot claim you as a Maine-born author; but it is possible that you are not opposed to "adoption." Some of our nicest authors are adopted! -- Rachel Field, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Charles G. Wilson, even a compatriot of yours, Ivy Bolton. Our particular reason for mentioning this matter is the Maine Author Collection, an exhibit of about fifteen hundred books, written by Maine people -- native and adopted -- and inscribed for this purpose.

The inscriptions are extremely interesting, and of course do lend distinction to these books. Some inscriptions are bits of original verse, occasionally autobiographical highlights, anecdotes, a pen-and-ink sketch, a tribute to Maine, sometimes a note about the writing of the book: they are always fascinating.

Mr. Alfred Noyes
March 15, 1944
-2-

We hope that you may share our belief that THE SECRET OF POODUCK ISLAND would be an appropriate addition to the Maine Author Collection. If you do, we shall be very happy to place an inscribed copy on the shelves.

Please accept our good wishes for the success and long life of this charming story; and also our cordial invitation to call at the library and see the Maine Author Collection when you are again in Maine.

Sincerely yours

hmj
Encl--1

Secretary



J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
Publishers Since 1792

PHILADELPHIA • NEW YORK • CHICAGO • LONDON • TORONTO

NEW YORK OFFICE
521 FIFTH AVENUE
VANDERBILT 6-3980

May 15, 1944

Mrs. F.W. Jacob
Maine State Library
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

Dr. Noyes has referred to me your letter of March 15th, inviting him to present an autographed copy of THE SECRET OF FOODUCK ISLAND for the Maine Author Collection. He is quite willing to sign the book and, in fact, suggests inscribing it with an unpublished Maine poem. I think you will agree with me that this is a very exciting and generous response to the invitation.

I think if you knew how many requests an author receives for gratis copies of his books, you will also agree with me that the book itself should be supplied either by you or by the publisher. I am therefore having a copy of FOODUCK ISLAND mailed to Dr. Noyes in California, with a request that he autograph it and return it to you. If you wish to have this charged to your library account, please let me know.

Very truly yours,

Helen Dean Fish

Children's Books

HDF:hb

May 17, 1944

Miss Helen Dean Fish
Children's Books
J. B. Lippincott Company
521 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Miss Fish:

Your friendly response about THE SECRET OF POODUCK ISLAND brought us the good news of Dr. Noyes' willingness to inscribe a copy of this charming book for the Maine Author Collection. This is a delightful thought, in the tradition of the collection. The enclosed article from the February Bulletin of the Maine Library Association will perhaps give you an idea of the type of inscriptions with which we are constantly being surprised and pleased.

We are sorry that our former letter evidently failed to make clear one point: that this is an exhibit collection entirely comprised of presentation copies of Maine books. Because we do realize how very many unthinking requests for gifts authors receive, we try never to seem insistent, but only to explain what the collection is, and to extend to Maine authors the invitation to inscribe gift copies of their books if they wish. From the beginning, we are gratified that authors have wished to do so, and it is mainly their generous interest which has increased the Maine Author Collection so rapidly these past few years; but we do understand that occasionally some authors feel that they cannot join in such an enterprise although it may be for permanent display, preservation, and of genuine historical worth.

Miss Helen Dean Fish

May 17, 1944

-2-

If we were enabled to abandon the idea of making this a gift collection, those authors who have enthusiastically presented their books over a period of years could justifiably charge us with inconsistency; and it is therefore a regrettable impossibility for us to assume even the modest cost of so lovely a book as THE SECRET OF POODUCK ISLAND for the Maine Author Collection. Of course we did buy copies for inclusion in our traveling libraries, which reach children and adults all over the state.

We believed it best to write to you at once and explain the matter. If this policy means that we shall not have the pleasure of adding an inscribed copy of THE SECRET OF POODUCK ISLAND to the Maine Author Collection, we can only again express our regret, but add our good wishes for its continued success, and thanks for your kindness in writing to us.

Sincerely yours

hmj
Encl--1

Secretary



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June 12, 1944

Mrs. F.W. Jacob
Maine State Library
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

I am sending you today by bookpost the copy of **THE SECRET OF POODUCK ISLAND** which Dr. Noyes has inscribed with an original poem for your special collection. The poem is a treasure and I think this book will be a valuable acquisition.

Very truly yours,

Children's Books

HDF:hb

June 14, 1944

Dr. Alfred Noyes
c/o J. B. Lippincott Company
521 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Dr. Noyes:

The Maine Author Collection copy of THE SECRET OF POODUCK ISLAND has reached us; and at once we express appreciation of the opportunity to include the book in this exhibit, and of the lovely poem which you have used as an inscription. You have captured the essence of coastal beauty in these lines: they are especially fitting as an inscription to this delightful story.

Please accept our thanks for your interest, and a renewal of our invitation to call and see the collection when you may again be in Maine.

Sincerely yours

hmj

Secretary

June 14, 1944

Miss Helen Dean Fish
Children's Books
J. B. Lippincott Company
521 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Miss Fish:

The copy of THE SECRET OF POODUCK ISLAND, inscribed so originally and delightfully, has arrived; and we are adding it to the Maine Author Collection with great pleasure and with appreciation of your interest in this idea.

We quite agree with you about the poem THE HAPPY HUNTING-GROUNDS. It is lovely, and it seems so perfectly suited to the personality of this charming story.

Please accept our thanks for your kindness.

We are also expressing our thanks to Dr. Noyes under separate cover.

Sincerely yours

hmj

Secretary