

October 2015

W. Maxwell Reed Correspondence

William Maxwell Reed 1871-1962

Miss Margaret McElderry
Harcourt, Brace & Company

Hilda McLeod
Maine State Library

Hilda McLeod Jacob
Maine State Library

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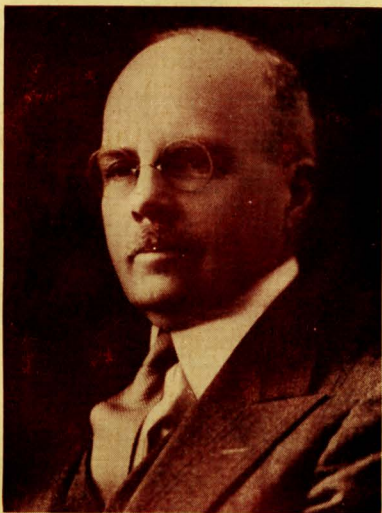
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REED, William Maxwell.

Born at Bath in 1871.



THE AUTHOR

W. Maxwell Reed was born in Bath, Maine. He attended Brown and Nichols School at Cambridge, Massachusetts, then went on to Harvard. After leaving college he was employed in the Astronomical Observatory at Harvard as a research assistant, later teaching astronomy in the college and summer school. He also taught astronomy at Princeton, acting as assistant to Professor C. A. Young, the director. During this period he had the unusual experience of serving as navigator on an expedition to Hudson's Straits.

Turning then to the field of business, he established the cost system for John A. Roebling's Sons Company at Trenton, N. J., where he had charge of the cost and time department for several years. For some time he held a position with the American Telephone and Telegraph Company in New York City, and then retired to devote his time to writing and travel. Numerous articles by Mr. Reed have appeared in magazines—Scribner's, Better Homes and Gardens, The Astronomical Journal, etc. His home is in Montclair, New Jersey.

December 15, 1937

Mr. W. Maxwell Reed
c/o Harcourt, Brace and Company
383 Madison Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Reed:

With a surprised delight, we learned that you are a son of Maine, and we realized instantly how very much the Maine Author Collection would be enriched, by being able to claim you and your books which have done so much to make science fascinating for young minds.

The Maine Author Collection numbers several hundred volumes, most of which are inscribed presentation copies, written by Maine persons. These books are for exhibit purposes only, and in connection with the project, we assemble all available biographical material, criticisms, reviews, pictures, and such data. The worth and interest of such an array of Maine literature is readily apparent, and our authors have been very generous.

We hope that you will want to inscribe at least one of your splendid books, ANIMALS ON THE MARCH, AND THAT'S WHY, THE EARTH FOR SAM, THE STARS FOR SAM, or THE SEA FOR SAM, for this purpose. We would be grateful for this gift, and we will hope that at some time we can acquire the set, for we will not consider the Maine Author Collection complete until all your books are represented.

We extend to you our best wishes for a successful continuation of your writing, and also our holiday greetings.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm

SECRETARY

January 15 1938 Sunday

Miss Hilda McLeod, Secy

Maine State Library
Augusta, Me.

My dear Miss McLeod

A few days ago I went to New York City and autographed a copy of *Animals on the March* and the publishers Harcourt, Brace & Co. are sending you this copy.

I am very glad to have one of my books in the Maine State Library because my family have lived near the mouth of the Kennebec River for about 250 years. When they first came there they had to fight the Indians. For about 200 years my ancestors were ship builders and ship owners. My father inherited the ship yards and the *Ass't* but he was too lost to engage in this business.

Sincerely

W. Maxwell Reed

January 20, 1938

Mr. W. Maxwell Reed
41 Union Street
Montclair, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Reed:

Thank you very, very much for the copy of ANIMALS ON THE MARCH, which has reached us, and will be added at once with delight to the Maine Author Collection. You are very kind to send us the start of your books, and when we acquire the others, as we certainly must do one day, we hope if we send them to you, you will be kind enough to inscribe those also.

The information about your family is very interesting, and we will include it in our biographical file.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm

SECRETARY

February 28, 1938

Mr. W. Maxwell Reed
41 Union Street
Montclair, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Reed:

Under separate cover, we are sending to you THE EARTH FOR SAM, THE SEA FOR SAM, THE STARS FOR SAM, AND THAT'S WHY, and we hope you will be so kind as to inscribe them for the Maine Author Collection.

We enclose a return label and sufficient postage to cover mailing charges.

Your cooperation and kindness in adding this distinctive touch to the books will be greatly appreciated. We are delighted to be able to have all your books in the collection, and we hope that as "time marches on", we will be privileged to add others.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm
Encl---label
35~~6~~

SECRETARY

Friday March 4 1938

My dear Miss McLeod

I am today mailing you the Earth, Stars, Sea, and Why, which I have autographed as you desired. For convenience in packing I am mailing them in two packages.

I am very glad to have these books kept in the state library of my native state, and I appreciate the trouble you have taken to send them to me for my signature.

My family have lived near the mouth of the Kennebec R. for about 250 years. Since about 1720 or thereabouts they have been ship builders and ship owners - until the collapse of the full-rigged ship. One was Samuel McCobb who was a major in command of the local militia. When news reached him of the battle at Lexington + the Concord fight, he immediately

took his Battalion to Massachusetts in time for the battle of Bunker Hill. Soon he was made Colonel and came back and recruited his Battalion to a regiment. Later he was made brigade's general. He commanded a contingent of Maine troops on the ill-fated expedition to take Quebec. Before they got half way through the wilderness McCobb and his immediate superior withdrew from the expedition & returned with their troops. They regarded the further advance through the wilderness as foolish. Some say that if McCobb had continued with his troops Quebec would have been taken and today all Canada would be a part of the U.S.A.

McCobb's grand son Col Reed commanded the same regiment in the war of 1812. One afternoon a British frigate anchored at what is now Fort Popham. It was obviously their intention to sail up the river the next morning and destroy the ship yards and warehouses. The regiment had only muskets and no cannon. Col. Reed assembled his troops and that night they dug earth works on the top of a high

Hill - Sugar loaf - which rises abruptly from the water and easily commands the mouth of the river. Our troops also cut pine logs to look like cannon and painted them black. These guns were placed on the earth works and aimed at the British boat. When as soon as it was light the men marched up the hill and around the earth works and appeared in various places on the shore so as to give the impression there were several regiments quartered there. The bluff worked - the British sailed away and the ship yards were not damaged.

My father inherited this same ship yard and the part ownership in a fleet of some 60 ships. Of course as you well know all that business is now extinct. When my father was a boy he used to play with these wooden guns. When I was a boy he took me down to the old Anastral houses to find me if there guns, but they had all been lost.

Sincerely
W. Maxwell Reed

March 7, 1938

Mr. W. Maxwell Reed
41 Union Street
Montclair, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Reed:

Thank you for inscribing the books, AND THAT'S WHY, THE EARTH FOR SAM, THE STARS FOR SAM, and THE SEA FOR SAM, for the Maine Author collection. Your interest and generous contribution of your time is deeply appreciated.

Your letter presents many interesting facts about your family history -- you have a rich heritage, and we are very glad to have this material in our files.

You have our best wishes for continued success, and we hope that if you are in Augusta, you will call at the State Library and see the Maine Author Collection.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm

SECRETARY

March 19, 1943

Mr. William Maxwell Reed
41 Union Street
Montclair, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Reed:

The lack of AMERICA'S TREASURE and THE SKY IS BLUE from the Maine Author Collection occasions us disappointment and surprise.

You may recall that you generously inscribed and presented copies of your books to this exhibit. We do, of course, purchase them from a regular bookseller for inclusion in our traveling libraries; but at present we are writing to express the hope that you may want to continue your kindness by placing inscribed copies of these two books with your other work in the collection.

Our best wishes go to you for a happy continuation of the excellent service you are doing young readers.

Very truly yours,

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

SECRETARY

hmj

May 3, 1944

Mr. William Maxwell Reed
41 Union Street
Montclair, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Reed:

When we wrote to you last spring, it was to express profound regret at the omission of AMERICA'S TREASURE and THE SKY IS BLUE from the Maine Author Collection, to which you had previously presented inscribed copies of your books.

Our happy boast is that here are all the works of all Maine authors -- but it is not true when we lack even one book by a Maine man. We can only hope that you do want your books represented here in full, and that the pressure of other duties has deterred you from inscribing and sending them.

We should be appreciative of the honor of having these books in the collection, as well as of your generous interest in helping us to build such a valuable display.

Sincerely yours,

hmj

Secretary

August 23, 1946

Mr. William Maxwell Reed
41 Union Street
Montclair, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Reed:

Delighted though we usually are to be reminded of any Maine author, it was with a distinct sense of regret that such a reminder happened the other day. Two men visiting the library expressed a desire to see the Maine Author Collection. This is not at all unusual, for we have visitors and students frequently for this purpose. One of the men, however, seized at once upon your books; and again we realized that AMERICA'S TREASURE and THE SKY IS BLUE are not in this exhibit.

This is truly a most regrettable state, which we earnestly hope may be remedied. We write to you about the matter because you so graciously inscribed and presented your earlier books. It would give us great pleasure to include these two volumes which are now missing from the collection.

Sincerely yours,

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

4116 Pomona Ave., Coconut Grove,
Miami 33, Florida, Nov. 12, '46.

Maine Author Collection,
Maine State Library,
Augusta,
Maine.

My dear madam:

I regret at this long delay in handling your request for two of my books. I have just asked Miss Margaret McElderry, who is editor of the juvenile department of Harcourt, Brace & Co., to send them to you.

Some day if I ever get to Augusta, I should like to see your collection.

Sincerely,

W. Maxwell Reed

W. Maxwell Reed.

November 15, 1946

Mr. W. Maxwell Reed
4116 Pomona Avenue
Coconut Grove
Miami 33, Florida

Dear Mr. Reed:

Thank you for your very kind letter about the two books which the Maine Author Collection lacks. We shall watch eagerly for them, and let you know promptly when they arrive.

Sincerely yours,

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

November 21, 1946

Mr. W. Maxwell Reed
4116 Pomona Avenue
Coconut Grove
Miami 33, Florida

Dear Mr. Reed:

The inscribed copies of your two books, AMERICA'S TREASURE and THE SKY IS BLUE, have arrived; and it is with great pleasure and pride that we acknowledge their receipt.

We are most appreciative of your interest, and of your generosity in making it possible for the Maine Author Collection to include all your books.

Please accept our thanks, and the assurance of a very cordial welcome when you can make the promised call. We trust you are enjoying a pleasant winter.

Sincerely yours,

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

September 28, 1951

Mr. William Maxwell Reed
4116 Pomona Avenue
Coconut Grove
Miami 33, Florida

Dear Mr. Reed:

It seems a long time since we have had the pleasure of anticipating one of your new books. PATTERNS IN THE SKY has been added to our order list, and we have made a note of it to mention the publication in the November issue of the Bulletin of the Maine Library Association, so that all Maine libraries will know about it. Although advance notice indicates that it is a book written for young people, it will undoubtedly be useful for older beginners, too; and we welcome such material always.

You may remember that the Maine Author Collection, the exhibit of inscribed works of Maine people, includes proudly your earlier volumes. We hope that your generous interest will make it possible for us to add PATTERNS IN THE SKY.

Congratulations on your continued contribution of valuable and popular books to the field of science for young readers.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

hmj