

November 2015

Francis McKelden Smith Correspondence

Francis McKelden Smith 1887-

Francis N. Smith 1887-

Maine State Library

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Recommended Citation

Smith, Francis McKelden 1887-; Smith, Francis N. 1887-; and Maine State Library, "Francis McKelden Smith Correspondence" (2015). *Maine Writers Correspondence*. 542.

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SMITH, Francis N. (Francis McKelden)
b. Washington, D. C. 1887

June 10, 1958

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Briston
Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

Notice of the forthcoming publication of your book, A COUPLE OF BUSINESSMEN -- AND OTHER PIECES, came to our attention recently. We shall look forward with interest to its availability, and hope to see it soon.

We also hope that the Maine Author Collection may be privileged to include the book. Perhaps you know of this Maine exhibit. It includes all kinds of books, and authors old and new, as long as the book or author is connected with Maine. We are proud of the collection, and the inscriptions in the books. They attract visitors and students the year round, and form a most valuable and worthwhile testimony to Maine's contribution to literature.

Biographical and critical information is sought and preserved, for we like to have all available data on our Maine writers.

Although we realize that we cannot claim you as a native, we hope that through your residence in Maine you may be interested in the collection, and want to inscribe a copy of the new book for it. We should be happy to have it with the other Maine books.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine
June 12, 1958

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

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

I shall be glad to send the Library "A Couple of Business Men - and Other Pieces" as soon as the publisher gets the book out.

Thank you very much for your letter; I hope some of your readers will find at least a few of the pieces interesting.

If the Library would like a copy of my first book, "Written On Water," I will also send on a copy of that one.

Sincerely yours,

Francis N. Smith

June 20, 1958

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

It is very kind of you to promise an inscribed copy of your new book to the Maine Author Collection, and we anticipate its arrival with pleasure.

Yes, it would be indeed a pleasure to be able to include not only your latest, but also WRITTEN ON WATER, and we very much appreciate your interest and generosity.

We'll acknowledge the books promptly when they arrive.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine
June 23, 1958

Mrs. F. W. Jacob
In Charge of Maine Author Collection
Maine State Library
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

I am glad to contribute my books to the Library but sorry there are so many mistakes in *Written On Water*. These are, mostly, mistakes of the printer and will be corrected if a second edition is ever gotten out.

I have corrected whatever mistakes I have seen but purposely used, in a few instances, the split infinitive where it gave more verse flow.

Of course it is not to be expected that any reader will agree with everything said in this book; or like all of the poems. Indeed I, myself, would omit a poem here and there or make changes in others if I had it to do over again - a not unusual experience with most writers!

Sincerely yours,

Francis N. Smith
(Francis M. S. Smith)

Early Rising
Damariscotta, Maine
September 9, 1958

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

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

I have been waiting to answer your very kind letter of August 26th so as to include a copy of the new book.

As for this book, much the same thing may be said concerning it as said concerning the first book: some of the pieces will probably be liked (may even arouse a chuckle or two) and others will probably be disliked. Personally, I dislike rough language and think too many modern writers carry it to extremes. However, a little seems to me necessary if you are trying to portray real people and the way they actually talk. Also, being a reasonably sincere writer, I say what I think but don't insist on anyone's agreeing with me.

As for the piece, "A young Man Looks At Life And Death," it is, of course, controversial and most doctors would hoot at the idea that death may not be forever inevitable. That is, naturally, if we don't succeed in making this long-suffering old planet entirely uninhabitable. (I have just read that scientists have synthesized, from inert materials, "a substance that looks like and acts like DNA, the chemical that determines heredity in all living things from bacteria to man." If that isn't a long step in proving life a purely mechanical contrivance, what is it?)

Sincerely yours,

Francis M. Smith

September 16, 1958

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Early Rising
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you very much for the inscribed copy of
A COUPLE OF BUSINESSMEN, which we are happy to add
to the Maine Author Collection, with your earlier
book, WRITTEN ON WATER.

Many of these articles and verses confess
that you certainly enjoyed yourself while writing
them. The satire and sense of fun, as well as
iconoclasm, are refreshing; and we hope that
A COUPLE OF BUSINESS MEN will meet many people and
make friends (whether agreeable or argumentative)
of them all.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

May 6, 1959

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Early Rising
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

Congratulations on the publication of your novel, TRIAL BY FIRE. We hope that it will enjoy a warm welcome and a lasting success; and of course we hope that an inscribed copy may join your other work in the Maine Author Collection.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

Early Rising
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine
May 8, 1959

Mrs. F. W. Jacob, In Charge of Maine Author Collection
Maine State Library
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

Referring to your letter to me of May sixth: I shall be very glad to send you a copy of my latest book, "Trial By Fire," as soon as my copies are received from the publisher. They are due any day now. This one is exciting if little else.

If you have time, I will be obliged if you will tell me how to go about joining the Library and whether it has a list of the books it contains. Or perhaps one simply writes in, naming a book wanted and if it is not out or the Library owns a copy, it is simply sent on to the member. I suppose, of course, there is a mailing fee and, possibly, a membership fee.

I am sorry to bother you but I really would like to join the Library especially to obtain reference works.

Sincerely,

Francis M. Smith
(" Mck. " per name)

May 12, 1959

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Early Rising
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

It is good to know that the Maine Author Collection may anticipate your new book, and we shall of course acknowledge its safe arrival.

We have good news for you: to use the State Library services, it is not necessary to join anything; and the only cost, as you will see in the enclosed leaflet, is the return postage on books. We pay the postage when we mail them to you, and you pay the postage on the returning books.

We do not have a printed list of the contents of the library, but we issue regularly a selected list of recent acquisitions. If you would like to have a copy of this list as it is issued, let us know, and we'll gladly add your name to the mailing list. Or you may consult it at your local library. We send the list to all libraries in the state.

You may request books by title, or you may simply ask for material of a specific nature, or author; or you can let us know in what you are interested, and we will be glad to select books for you. The lending period on most items is three weeks, at the end of which time you may request a renewal, if you wish. If no one is waiting for the book, we will renew it for two more weeks.

Mr. Francis N. Smith

May 12, 1959

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We do not have modern fiction -- this is available through our traveling libraries and the bookmobile service -- with the exception of certain classics which are on high school required reading lists.

We have a great many magazines, much technical material, an excellent New England town and family history section, and ample general reading.

When we send you books, we also send a form letter notifying you, and telling you of any special time limitation on the items. The date due is stamped in the back of each book, also; and we send you a return mailing label.

We hope this explains satisfactorily our service, but if you have further questions, please let us know. We hope that you will use your State Library frequently and with enjoyment.

Sincerely yours

hmj
Encl--1

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

Early Rising
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine
May 14, 1959

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

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

Thank you so much for the information about the Library. I expect to get a lot of help from it in connection with my next book.

The present one is rather exciting but not very interesting. The next one should be more entertaining.

I don't like plastering my photo on the back cover of this book. But the publisher was insistent. Alas, he has the last word.

With deep appreciation for the trouble you took in answering my questions, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Francis D. Smith

May 18, 1959

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Early Rising
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you very much for the inscribed copy
of TRIAL BY FIRE for the Maine Author Collection.

This is certainly a dramatic tale, with enough
color and action to satisfy any reader. The unusual
device of the present tense creates a sense of
immediacy, and we certainly agree with the jacket
declaration that it is "a suspense novel."

We hope it will enjoy a huge success.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

August 26, 1958

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

When WRITTEN ON WATER arrived, we welcomed it warmly for the Maine Author Collection, and held it, pending the arrival of your new book. It would seem, however, to imply lack of appreciation if we delayed longer acknowledging your very kind gift to the Maine exhibit.

We look forward with interest to A COUPLE OF BUSINESS MEN..., and meanwhile thank you for this volume. You're quite right, of course, about the appeal of the contents; but the fact that not every poem will meet with unqualified agreement and admiration merely gives variety and added stimulation to the reading.

We will let you know when we receive A COUPLE OF BUSINESS MEN, and again -- thank you for your interest in the collection.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

Early Rising
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine

May 26, 1961

Mrs. F. W. Jacob, In Charge of Maine Author
Collection
Maine State Library
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

Here is another book for The Library.
As mentioned in the preface, an inter-
esting Irishman prodded me into writing
letters away back in the early thirties and
I have been doing it ever since. As the people
who received the letters seemed to find them
mildly humorous or interesting, a friend sug-
gested I make some of them up into a book.
The enclosed perpetration is the result.

Right now I am busy with another book
but when this one is finished I hope to avail
myself of The Library's facilities as reading
and writing are my favorite occupations.

Thank you so much for the information
about The Library contained in your letter to
me of May 12, 1959.

Sincerely yours,

Francis M. Smith

June 2, 1961

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Early Rising
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

You are indeed kind to remember the Maine Author Collection, and our interest in adding your new books to the shelves of the Maine exhibit.

We welcome LETTERS TO MALONEY, ET AL., and send you our appreciative thanks for this most interesting collection.

Accept our good wishes for a successful completion of the book now under way. We shall be glad to have you avail yourself of the library's service whenever we can help you.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

Early Rising
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine
May eighteenth

Mrs. F. W. Jacob
In Charge of Maine Author Collection
Maine State Library
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

Here's another book for The Library. It may be surprising to receive more of these letters but they seem to be a best bet as far as my writing is concerned. STORY'S Editors said so and they used to be good judges of an aspiring writer's output. But in spite of their verdict, I have a novel in prospect and will undoubtedly need The Library's help in research. However, I won't start the actual writing until next year. The tentative title to this one is Enter A Strange Country. Novel writing is certainly a strange country to me. I only hope I don't get completely lost

in it!

Cordially,

Francis D. Smith

May 25, 1962

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Early Rising
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for remembering the Maine Author Collection with an inscribed copy of your new book, MORE LETTERS TO MALONEY, ET AL. Those who enjoyed the previous collection will be happy to see the new volume, and we are delighted to be able to include it in the collection.

Congratulations on the decision to try your hand at a novel. We shall, of course, be glad to help in any way possible, and we hope that you will find it a satisfying field in which to work.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

March 26, 1963

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Early Rising
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

It will be a pleasure to welcome your new book, SOUTH OF YESTERDAY. We read a newspaper notice, and hope that we shall see the book soon.

You have been so kind to the Maine Author Collection that perhaps our letter is superfluous, but we do hope that an inscribed copy of the new volume may join your earlier ones.

Good luck to it.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

Apartment 824-B
The Westchase
Washington 16, D. C.
March 30, 1963

Mrs. F. W. Jacob, In Charge of Maine Author Collection
Maine State Library
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacob,

I have your letter of March 26th, forwarded to me from my home in Maine (Damariscotta). I am glad the library would like a copy of my latest publication, Saeth of yesterday, as one including one with this letter.

Curiosity getting the better of me, I am wondering if these books are really read or simply gather dust on the library shelves? Of course they are of no particular consequence; are merely meant to be either mildly amusing or a bit controversial. But if I live long enough I hope to get a book out of serious import dealing with some of the frightful problems gnawing up on us confused and bewildered moderns.

Thanking you for your interest, I am

Sincerely yours,

Francis M. Smith

April 9, 1963

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Apartment 824-B
The Watchtower
Washington 16, D. C.

Dear Mr. Smith:

It is kind of you to send a copy of your new book, SOUTH OF YESTERDAY, for the Maine Author Collection. We welcome it, and are glad to know that the story is to be continued in further volumes.

As for the books in the general lending section of the library, we can assure you that they are very busy, going and coming, because we serve the entire state.

The Maine Author Collection, however, is not lent at any time. It is a permanent exhibit, available at all times during library hours to students and visitors, who are welcome to browse, to use the books here in the library for research or recreation. They do not, as a consequence, suffer the wear and tear that the lending section does; but we could hardly afford this, because it would be difficult, if not impossible, to replace an inscribed copy, and so the collection books must stay in the library for their own protection.

And as for dust: libraries are no more exempt from housekeeping than homes. We have to dust continually, whether a particular book has been used today or not!

Thank you again for your interest and generous contribution.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

March 20, 1964

Mr. Francis N. Smith
Damariscotta
Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

What a pleasant surprise, on the first day of spring, to have a copy of your new book, SOUTH OF YESTERDAY, for the Maine Author Collection.

You are kind to remember us, and we are delighted to welcome another of your friendly, chatty books.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

February 25, 1966

Mr. Francis McKelden Smith
Bristol Road
Damariscotta, Maine

Dear Mr. Smith:

Some time ago a package of a number of your books arrived. Some we already had in the Maine Author Collection, but others we did not.

Although the return name and address was not yours, it seems likely that you had a hand in the matter, and so we send our thanks to you. It is good to know that you remember the collection, and we are glad to add the missing titles to your section of the shelves.

We hope the winter is kind to you, and that you are storing up more memories and more material for letters.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection