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September 2015

Joseph E. Coyne Correspondence

Joseph E. Coyne 1918-1978

Hilda McLeod Jacob

Maine State Library

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COYNE, Joseph E
b. Portland, Maine, May 1918

June 29, 1956

Mr. Joseph E. Coyne
66 Cumberland Avenue
Portland, Maine

Dear Mr. Coyne:

The announcement of the forthcoming novel by you is most interesting. We look forward to seeing it upon publication, and send you our good wishes for its success.

We are particularly interested in Maine writers, and try to obtain all the information possible about them. When you have the opportunity, would you send us a brief biographical sketch for our files?

You may know already of the Maine Author Collection, which is a permanent exhibit collection of books written by Maine people, or those living here, and of books about the state. The volumes are for the most part inscribed presentation copies. We take pride in the variety of the books, and the originality of the inscriptions. Students and visitors find the collection a valuable and fascinating display, and we hope that when your novel is published you will want to inscribe and present a copy for this purpose.

Meanwhile, our congratulations and best wishes to you.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

September 6, 1956

Mr. Joseph E. Coyne
66 Cumberland Avenue
Portland, Maine

Dear Mr. Coyne:

The Putnam catalog was welcome this fall, for we learned a little more about your novel, THE THRESHING FLOOR. We are sorry that we shall have to wait until January, but we judge that the wait will be worth our while. It sounds like a wonderful story.

Do you recall that we wrote you in June about the possibility of including an inscribed copy in the Maine Author Collection? We shall continue to hope that this may be our good fortune.

Good luck to the book.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

December 10, 1958

Mr. Joseph E. Coyne
66 Cumberland Avenue
Portland, Maine

Dear Mr. Coyne:

You will probably remember that we wrote about your novel, THE THRESHING FLOOR, and the possibility of having an inscribed copy to place in the Maine Author Collection.

Because this copy never arrived, we think that the matter was very likely overlooked in the pressure of business naturally attendant upon the publication of your book.

We still hope that the collection may be honored by a copy, and we hope you agree that as the work of a Maine author, it ought to be with the other Maine books.

Holiday greetings to you.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

66 Cumberland Ave.
Portland, Maine
Sept. 7, 1956

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

Dear Mrs. Jacob;

I'm sorry to have seemed to neglected a reply to your letter of June, as I have been buried in work and correspondence as you can well imagine. Naturally I was delighted to receive from you what I consider something of official recognition in my home state, and of course I hope my book will be a credit to the high standard set by Maine writers of the past.

As to the copy of my book, Mr. Ted Purdy, the Vice President of Putnam's informed me he would see to it that a copy would be sent to you, and perhaps sometime thereafter I will have the opportunity to drop into the State Library and inscribe the book, if you wish.

I, too, was a bit dismayed that Putnam's had put off publication until January, but they informed me that the pre-Christmas season would not be the most propitious time to launch a new writer, and that they felt my novel would get more attention in January. From the rather complimentary tone of Mr. Purdy's letters I gather that they have high hopes for my book and want to give it every advantage.

Any biographical material on myself must be limited to a few rather dry statistics. I was born here in Portland on May 9, 1918. My father, Michael Coyne and my mother, Mary Corcoran, were both born in County Galway, Ireland. My schooling has been in the parish schools and Cheverus High School. My wife, Mary Thornton, and I were married June 25, 1949. We have two children.

As to my writing, with which you are obviously more concerned, I have always had a one-track mind about it. I have never had any other idea. I've had no formal training in literary composition other than two brief correspondence courses which proved less than useless, dealing as they did with only the most elementary technicalities of writing which anyone can obtain from a public library. Briefly, then, any ability which I have has been self-taught, though I was somewhat encouraged by the interest of a few of priests who taught me in high school. Since high school I have been writing more or less continuously and with very little prospect of success, though I have always been confident that success would come. I hope it doesn't sound trite for me to say that writing is still one per-cent inspiration and 99 per-cent perspiration. Undoubtedly there must have been an easier way to become a writer, but probably the hard way is the most rewarding.

May I thank you again for your good wishes, and hope that you will like my novel.

Cordially,

Joseph E. Coyne
Joseph E. Coyne

September 14, 1956

Mr. Joseph E. Coyne
66 Cumberland Avenue
Portland, Maine

Dear Mr. Coyne:

Thank you very much for your friendly and informative letter. We look forward to seeing THE THRESHING FLOOR, and when it arrives, we will write to you again about having it inscribed.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

January 16, 1957

Mr. Joseph E. Coyne
66 Cumberland Avenue
Portland, Maine

Dear Mr. Coyne:

It is good news that your novel THE THRESHING FLOOR is now published, and we look forward to seeing a copy. Last September, you may recall, you wrote to us that a copy would arrive for inclusion in the Maine Author Collection. We anticipate with pleasure being able to add the work of a new Maine writer to the collection.

Our very good wishes for the success of THE THRESHING FLOOR.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection