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James Noble Gifford Correspondence

James Noble Gifford

Gay Rutherford

Hilda McLeod Jacob
Maine State Library

Maine State Library

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RUTHERFORD, Gay. (James Noble Gifford)

b. New York City

November 4, 1954

Mr. James Noble Gifford
c/o Arcadia House, Inc.
419 Fourth Avenue
New York City 16

Dear Gay Rutherford:

It is always a pleasure to learn of a new Maine author and book, and when we read of your MAINE INTERLUDE, we immediately tried to find information about you. We shall have to admit failure, and so we must ask: are you from Maine?

We are especially interested in all Maine writing, and we noted your book in the Bulletin of the Maine Library Association. At present, we write because of the Maine Author Collection, a permanent exhibit of Maine books, most of the two thousand volumes inscribed presentation copies. It is a fascinating and valuable collection, and attracts visitors and students because it is the only place where all books of all Maine writers are gathered together and preserved as a unit, together with biographical and critical material.

We hope that we shall have the pleasure of adding an inscribed copy of MAINE INTERLUDE to the shelves, and that you will be so kind as to let us know whether or not you were born in this state.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

hmj

HYDE PARK HOTEL

404 WEST LAFAYETTE STREET
TAMPA 6, FLORIDA

November 14th, 1954.

Dear Mrs. Jacobs,

How kind of you to write me in regard to "Maine Interlude" written under my pen name of Gay Rutherford. I am honored but not quite sure I deserve it because I was not born in Maine. I was even late in discovering it, alas, but perhaps the discovery was therefore the more exciting. I was born in New York City and since twenty one have wandered. I have no settled home but I refuse to say no home. All America is my home at last. For so many years I said "Where I hang my hat is home and I have not hat." Now I have a hat so I am here for a while where I don't need it. What I love and am interested in is home. And I set my romances in those places. I believe in writing of

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HYDE PARK HOTEL

404 WEST LAFAYETTE STREET
TAMPA 6, FLORIDA

place so I can go back there. and be
welcome

I spent twelve summers in Rockland
which I call "Stonehaven" in the several
books I have set there. This summer, also,
I missed. My first story of Maine was
called "Pleasant Street" I always stay at
16 Pleasant Street and have used the
house. Mr and Mrs. Carley, he. Maine
Central General Agent, are splendid friends.

I am working on a Maine story
now so as I wrote my editor my mind
and heart are up in Maine while my
body is in Florida. I'm calling it "Where
the Winds Blow Free" - and I can feel them
all the way down here where right now I
am too warm. Ah, those grand cool winds
of the rock bound coast of Maine in summer.
and where else but in Augusta can I sit
on the porch of a great capitol building
in a rocking chair. To me those

HYDE PARK HOTEL

404 WEST LAFAYETTE STREET
TAMPA 6, FLORIDA

chairs are a symbol of the happy, informality of the State of Maine.

I write of Florida, California, Arizona and the lovely Eastern Shore of Maryland. I believe in clear, interesting stories of present day life and problems pleasantly told. I believe in laughter and basic goodness in every one. I almost said almost but I won't. And I am not very important so I'm not surprised you find out nothing about me.

In fact I wonder if I am important enough to be part of your collection which sound so interesting. You need have my five friend Elizabeth Ogilvie who lives on her wonderful island. I'm writing Miss Sacks, Arcadia House editor, asking her to send you a copy of "Maine Interlude" since I've given mine away. If you wish

MRS. T. R. MIMS
OWNER

PHONE H 2112

HYDE PARK HOTEL

404 WEST LAFAYETTE STREET
TAMPA 6, FLORIDA

I shall proudly autograph it when I come to see your collection in early June. That I shall look forward to in any case. If you feel I don't really qualify as a Maine author just put me down as one who tried to see "Good in Everything" a la Shakespeare and Aban Ben Adhem and when I drop in I'm sure I can make you laugh at least. You know. "Put me down as one who loved the "Pine Tree State". Though in my heart I always tell people met in my wanderings that I think of it as the "White Birch State".

A church carillon is playing "In the Garden". A nice background for a happy Sunday morning better even a strangely cloudy one. Again thanks for your interest and best wishes to you and for your fine work.

Jay Rutherford
Says thanks, too.

Sincerely

James Noble Gifford.

November 17, 1954

Mr. James Noble Gifford
Hyde Park Hotel
404 West Lafayette Street
Tampa 6, Florida

Dear Mr. Gifford:

It is delightful to have your friendly letter. May we assure you immediately that the Maine Author Collection includes not only the books written by people born in Maine, but also books with Maine as a setting, and books by writers who are closely connected with the state. Such authors as Laura E. Richards, Ben Ames Williams, Henry Beston and Elizabeth Coatsworth and Gladys Hasty Carroll are here; and certain books (in which the state appears as a background) of, for instance, Abbie Huston Evans, Elinor Graham, Gerald Warner Brace, Hubert V. Coryell, and of course your friend Elisabeth Ogilvie, who is one of our favorite adopted authors.

There are many more, but you can see that Maine itself is the keynote. If a writer was born here, or lives here, or uses Maine as part of a story, we are eager to have the book in the collection.

You modestly wonder whether you are important enough to be included. Don't you think that the word is relative? Is the lovely little book TOMMY THATCHER GOES TO SEA by Berta and Elmer Hader, or THE RADIANT LIFE by Rufus M. Jones, more important? To whom, and for what purpose? The Haders set their story for children in Maine; Dr. Jones was born in Maine. Both books are in the Maine Author Collection and we are proud of both.

We should enjoy very much adding any of your Maine books to the exhibit shelves, and we look forward to saying "Thank you" when you call.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

hmj

December 6, 1954

Mr. James Noble Gifford
Hyde Park Hotel
404 West Lafayette Street
Tampa 6, Florida

Dear Mr. Gifford:

Thank you very much for the copy of MAINE INTERLUDE which arrived today. We are adding it to the Maine Author Collection with appreciation of your generous interest, and delight in another Maine book. Perhaps when you are here some day you will inscribe it for us.

The "grand cool winds" of which you spoke are coming out of a gray northeast sky today, and promising us snow soon; but when warmer weather heralds another summer, we shall hope to see you and express our thanks in person. Meanwhile, a comfortable and happy winter to you.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

hmj

MRS. T. R. MIMS
OWNER

PHONE H 2112

HYDE PARK HOTEL
404 WEST LAFAYETTE STREET
TAMPA 6, FLORIDA

Dear Mrs. Jacob.

Thanks for your grand
letters. And best wishes for all
kinds of health, wealth and above all
that "peace which passeth understanding".

I feel quite excited when I
write Christmas cards because they are like
happy little visits to all my widely scattered
friends. I have just sent one to Miss Ogilvie
telling her how proud I am to have been
asked for a book and what grand letters you
have written me.

Sincerely,

James Noble Lafford.

Acknowledged 12.27.54.hmj

