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Merle Dixon Graves Correspondence

Merle Dixon Graves 1887-1961

Hilda McLeod
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Hilda McLeod Jacob
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January 14, 1935

Mr. Merle Dixon Graves
249 Holmes Road
Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Mr. Graves:

We have recently purchased a copy of your inimitable portrayal of New England humor, BUB-LIN'S AN' B'LLIN'S AT THE CENTER. It is very evident that the jacket on this sparkling book has spoken correctly, when it says, "Mr. Graves' knowledge of rural community life has come from close contact with many unique characters." And how refreshing to discover at last a Maine man who can write of the wit and droll quaintness of our New Englanders with kindness and understanding!

We are glad to be able to add this book to our Maine Author Collection, and are sending it to you, hoping that you will be kind enough to inscribe it, as our other writers do. This collection was started over twelve years ago, and includes the writings of contemporary Maine-born authors. It numbers several hundred volumes, all interestingly autographed or inscribed. We are always pleased to include a new name, and we are especially glad to have this book, which is so typical of Maine and her people.

We have noticed the announcement of your book now in preparation, THE INDIAN STORY OF CREATION, and we hope that you will want to send us an inscribed copy for the Maine Author Collection.

Also, we would very much appreciate some biographical information. The few items on the jacket of the present book give a bare outline. We would like a few paragraphs of a more personal nature, if possible. Our Maine Author file contains much material that is available nowhere else, which our authors have been kind enough to contribute, and we hope that you will want to cooperate with us to the end that we may have more complete information about you.

Very truly yours,

Maine State Library
Secretary
Miss Hilda McLeod, Secretary,
Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine.

My dear Miss McLeod:

It was a great pleasure to receive your kind letter of January 14th and to be made to feel that I could add in any way to the quality of your Maine Author Collection. I am delighted to know you have such a collection and it is a real satisfaction to know that "Bubblin's An' B'illin's" will be added to it.

You ask for some biographical information about myself. May I say that I was born at Bowdoinham, Maine, October 13, 1887. My father, was the Rev. Lucien Chase Graves, a graduate of Bates College and Cobb Divinity School. Vienna Maine was his birthplace. My mother was Annie May Dixon, whose birthplace was Chesterfield, Maine. After holding pastorates at Bowdoinham, Me. Union, N.H., Gilmanton, N.H. and other places, my father returned to Farmington, Me. around 1901. I graduated from the Farmington, Me. High School in the class of 1904, of which I was salutatorian. Entering Amherst College in the fall of that year at the age of 16, I graduated in 1908, B.A., taught school for a year at the Barnard School For Boys in New York City and then entered Harvard Law School, from which I graduated in the class of 1912, L.L.B.

Dec. 27, 1910 I married Clara Cooley Stevenson, of Pittsfield, Mass. We have two children, a son, Walter Lucien Graves, born Mar. 2, 1912 and a daughter, Clara Cooley Stevenson, born July 26th 1913.

From 1912 until the spring of 1918 I engaged in the practice of law in Springfield, Mass. At that time I enlisted as a private in the Field
Artillery and was sent to Camp Zachary Taylor, Louisville, Ken., where I received my commission as Second Lieutenant, Dec. 4, 1918, at the close of the war.

I returned to Springfield, opened my law business and then entered political life. I served in the Massachusetts Legislature from 1920 to 1924. In the fall of 1925 I gave up the active practice of law and moved to Pittsfield, Mass. to look after a large estate which had come to Mrs. Graves by inheritance, which needed supervision and consolidation.

When in Amherst College, Charles Edward Garman was one of my instructors and his teachings have been a great influence in my life.

In 1930 Mrs. Graves and I felt it would be delightful to incorporate in some manner our understanding of New England Village life as we both had known it in our youth. The idea prompting these stories was to develop the New England Village, its institutions, activities and characters in a manner that would bring out the pleasant side of this life in contrast to the many sordid books on New England which have recently come from the press. Ninety per cent of the incidents recorded of a humorous nature have actually happened in our experience. "Bubblin's An' B'ilin's At The Center" is the result of this endeavor, having been urged to publish these stories by the many friends who so thoroughly enjoyed hearing them in our home.

You may be interested in the fact that I am broadcasting stories from the book on Friday afternoon, Jan. 25th and Friday afternoon Feb. 1st at 3.45 over W G Y.

Thanking you for your kind interest,

Sincerely yours,

Jan. 21, 1935.
January 26, 1935

Mr. Merle Dixon Graves
249 Holmes Road
Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Mr. Graves:

BUBBLIN'S AN' B'ILIN'S AT THE CENTER has arrived, and may we thank you for your most interesting and humorous inscription. The book is truly "a find!"

And how generous you were with the biographical material: just what we want. Thank you for this, also. It is being filed for future reference.

Would that we might listen to your radio broadcasts - it would be interesting to hear the author's voice expressing his characters.

Thank you again for your kindness and cooperation, and if we might hope for a copy of THE INDIAN STORY OF CREATION upon its completion, we assure you we would be delighted.

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

Secretary
March 25, 1935

Mr. Merle Dixon Graves
249 Holmes Road
Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Mr. Graves:

We have received/announcement of the publication of MANITOU AND THE ANIMALS, which we of course desire to include in our Maine Author Collection.

May we congratulate you upon your second volume, and wish you success in all other literary ventures.

We hope that you will want to inscribe a copy especially for our collection, and we assure you that it will be received with sincere gratitude and pleasure.

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

Secretary
Miss Hilda McLeod, Secretary,
Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine.

My dear Miss McLeod:

This is to acknowledge your kind letter of March 25th to Mr. Graves.

Mr. Graves will be very happy to inscribe a book "Manitou And The Animals" to your library for their collection.

We expect the book will be out about May 1st and trust you will enjoy having it and find it valuable.

Cordially yours,

Secretary.

April 12, 1935.
Mr. Merle Dixon Graves  
240 Holmes Road  
Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Mr. Graves:

We hope the delay in MANITOU AND THE ANIMALS is not an unfortunate one, otherwise than keeping us from adding your latest volume to the Maine Author Collection. That in itself is of course rather unfortunate, for we are anxious to read this book, the advance notices of which were so very complimentary.

We do appreciate your interest in our project, and especially your very material help in offering to present us with an inscribed volume of MANITOU AND THE ANIMALS. Thank you very much, and we hope that it will soon be off the press and on our shelves!

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

Im  
Secretary
Miss Hilda McLeod, Secretary, 
Maine State Library, 
Augusta, Maine.

My dear Miss McLeod;

I thank you for your kind letter of July 11th in regard to my new book, Manitou And The Animals.

There is been quite some delay in getting this book out but I now feel quite sure it will be out very soon. When it is I shall be very happy to send you one for your collection as I have previously promised, inscribed.

Sincerely yours,

MDG S
July 16, 1935.
Miss Hilda McLeod, Secretary,  
Maine State Library,  
Augusta, Maine.

Miss dear Miss McLeod:

I am today sending you by parcel post copy of my little book "Manitou And The Animals" which is just out. There has been quite some delay in the publication of this book but I trust you will find it enjoyable even at this late date.

Assuring you it is a pleasure to add this book to your collection,

Sincerely yours,

MDG S
Aug. 23, 1935.
August 26, 1935

Merle Dixon Graves
249 Holmes Road
Pittsfield, Mass.

Dear Mr. Graves:

MANITOU AND THE ANIMALS has arrived, and we hasten to express our very sincere thanks for this most interesting book. We assure you that the delay only furthered our eagerness to see the book, and we are not disappointed. We hope Manitou will be read by as wide a public as he merits. It is with great pleasure and pride that we add this volume to BUBILIN'S AN' B'ILIN'S AT THE CENTER.

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

Im

Secretary