September 2015

Julia Anna Cook Correspondence

Julia Anna Cook 1901-1993

Ruth A. Hazelton 1912-2001

Maine State Library

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COOK, JULIA ANNA
b. Quincy, Massachusetts - January 13, 1901
Maine State Library,  
Augusta  
Attention: Miss Hazelton,  
Librarian  

Dear Miss Hazelton:

I am a free-lance writer and have had articles widely published, but also have been writing verse since I was a child.

On the 15th I received from the Lincoln Press in Sanford 200 copies of a book of verse called "York County Ballads and Verses."

To date three quarters of them are either sold, or sent out for reviews, etc, and I find that I was too optimistic in estimating that I could send books to the libraries free of charge.

Would the State Library wish to pay $1.30 for a book of verse by a Maine resident since 1934? Born in Quincy, Mass. The country suits me just fine, and I think folks who live in Maine are most fortunate.

I pay the sales tax on mail orders.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Alfred, Maine 04002  
March 25, 1968
These women hauled the loam for sunken graves and cut large trees and poison-ivy vines, but left the ancient locust and the maple.

I rose from shadow of these ancient sorrows, and drank the substance of the summer day: and bright-eyed Nathan raised his baby face to the singing leaves of the ancient maple tree. His pert and pretty mother took his hand, these two the promise and the sweet fulfillment of many generations in these hills, but only pleasant visitors to this place, not kin to any of the ancient dead whose own descendants flourish like the trees that guard in murmuring peace their grassy beds.
EULOGY FOR A FARMER

It has been said of Leland, son of Emulous
and Sarah,
that he was born in Alfred Gore, July the
26th, in 1890,
and left this life on April 23rd, in
nineteen sixty-three
(on a grey day, of a dark week of surly
skies,)
leaving his wife, a daughter, two tall sons,
three sisters and two grandchildren.

But there is more that should be said:
that he was born, and lived on Gile home
acres,
serving them well. He was a gentle man
who wore his dignity as a great tree its
leaves.
Say his New England face was strong and noble,
that he had brown, large hands for patient
work,
that he was servant to the earth, and
carried
on his great shoulders natural excellence.

a few proof pages from "York County Ballads
and Verses" by Julia Anna Cook. The book
was done over, with 36 pages.
He left green fields and pastures, herds and barns, and he rose earlier, and worked harder than most men, reached higher on an apple tree, and held a larger hayfork, faced into fiercer storms, cut larger woodpiles, and never knowingly did harm to fellow man.

His was a life of love and sacrifice, but at its leaving it must now be said that we have lost a giant on the land, a modest man, not knowing his own worth.

He wanted no more praise than does the earth, but these words needed saying, now he's gone.
York County is a land of hills and lakes, of spacious fields and friendly villages; and those who farm where Alfred Gore is wedged between Fort Ridge and the lovely woodland valley of the Middle Branch of the winding Mousam River may travel sometimes, but they wander back. Some families love the Alfred Gore so much they've called it home for near two hundred years.

The Shapleigh town-line hugs the ridge-top so it seems to press the narrowed Gore against the lakes, and the West Road out of Waterboro. There is a glorious freedom for the eye, and families can look from one green hilltop across the valley to their inlaws' homes; moving from one town to another sometimes, but never far away from Alfred Gore. This is especially true of John Hall's family.

In the early sixteen hundreds, Halls of Sandall
Dear Mrs. Cook:

Your gift of LOVE SONG OF THE QUIET HEART is very much appreciated. We want to place it in the Maine Author Collection, which, as you may know, is a permanent collection, which, as you may know, is a permanent exhibit of books by Maine writers, or books about Maine. Most of these books are inscribed presentation copies, and we do hope that one day we may have the opportunity of at least your autograph in this one.

We also try to accumulate biographical information about Maine writers. Would you be so kind as to let us have a little sketch of this sort?

Please tell us, also, the price of the book, because we want to list it in the Maine in Print column of the Bulletin of the Maine Library Association.

These are most interesting poems, showing an appealing sympathy with nature and a deeply sensitive spirit. We hope there will be more collections. Thank you for sending it to us.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
Julia Anna Cook was born at Quincy, Massachusetts on January 13, 1901, the third of the five children of the Vermont-born sculptor John Horrigan and his Quincy-born wife, the former Helen Josephine Sullivan.

Before her marriage Mrs. Horrigan was a Quincy school teacher, and her children learned early in life to love books (especially poetry) and music. Julia graduated at the age of 16 from Woodward Institute in Quincy, and as her two older sisters were continuing their education in colleges, she took evening courses while working in a bank. She went by train to Boston University to study creative writing, and dreamed of putting down on paper all the beauties and joys and sorrows of the human race. Then she realized she couldn't do that until she lived them.

This took time and it wasn't until after she married and came to Maine to live, had three children and lost one, that she felt the need to seriously try to put some of the tragedy and the exultation of living into words. Poetry first and later stories and articles.

Her husband died in 1956, a week after his 61st birthday. He was Edward Philip Cook, called "Ted" for most of his life, and a graduate of Holy Cross College and Georgia Tech. He had been a combat pilot with the 138th and 91st Aero Squadrons in World War I, and later had an insurance business in Quincy. He and Julia married in the spring of 1934 and decided they wanted to live on a farm. So during a terrible January snowstorm in 1935 they moved to the newly-purchased Nathaniel Russell farm in Alfred Gore.

Both being city born and bred they survived but life was a continuous struggle for many years. The Maine conflagration of October 1947 destroyed hundreds of acres of timber on their land, but the buildings were saved. Their second child and only daughter, Geraldine, died two months before her 9th birthday in October of 1948. But Mrs. Cook still lives on the farm, as does her younger and unmarried son.

On the 20th anniversary of the 1947 fires she had articles about the York County fires in both Yankee and Down East magazines. Both different of course. Her articles and short stories have appeared in dozens of journals, many in the Portland papers and others in publications outside New England.

A collection of verse titled "York County Ballads and Verses" was published in 1968 and "Love Song of the Quiet Heart," a second verse collection, in 1969.

The Thomas Goodall statue in Sanford and also the Soldiers' Memorial in Denmark are the work of her father, John Horrigan. Her brother, Gerald Horrigan of Braintree and Quincy, Mass, is also a well-known sculptor. Her oldest sister, Miss Katherine Horrigan, taught school for over 51 years, retiring a few years ago from her position as head of the Math Dept at North Quincy High School.

July 19, 1970
October 15, 1970

Mrs. Julia A. Cook
Alfred
Maine 04002

Dear Mrs. Cook:

It is more than time that we acknowledged your very kind letter, and the package of clippings, as well as the Maine Author Collection copy of LOVE SONG OF THE QUIET HEART. Our information was too late to be included in the August bulletin, but the November issue of the Bulletin of the Maine Library Association should carry it.

We should be glad to have any letters such as those from Henry Beston which you mention, unless you think that Mrs. Beston would have a suggestion as to better location.

And of course we are delighted about E. B. White, but as a matter of fact, we have considered him a Maine author ever since Stuart Little when last seen was headed for Maine! Some of our favorite authors are "adopted."

Thank you very much for your interest, and for all the information. Perhaps you will find it possible to visit us after the library has moved into the new cultural building next year.

Sincerely yours

hjm

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

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

Your encouraging words about my book of verse - "Love Song of the Quiet Heart," are appreciated. I am sending an autographed copy for the library, and suggest you add the first copy I sent to your own collection. I just naturally assume you are a poetry-lover.

The price of my book is $1.75 and I will be happy to have it listed in the library's bulletin.

If I'm not interrupted I may get some biographical information down and enclose it with this letter.

Being in charge of the MaineAuthor Collection must be a pleasant assignment and I wish I lived nearer Augusta so I could spend some time at the library. In fact, hours and hours of time. Aren't we fortunate to be able to think of E. B. White as a Maine Author now? A very special genius with words is he.

Thanking you for your letter,

Faithfully,

[Signature]

P. S. - Under separate cover I am sending some newspaper clippings which might be of use as reference material. Perhaps you have a folder on Loring Williams for instance, and would want these articles to add to it.

Does the library like to have letters from authors? I have a few from Henry Beston for instance. Another Quincy-born friend who moved to Maine.