Irvine Graff Correspondence

Irvine Graff 1884-1976

Ella Irvine Graff 1884-1976

Caroline Warner Thorne 1875-1946

Hilda McLeod Jacob

Maine State Library

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GRAFF, Irvine
April 21, 1941

Miss Irvine Graff

c/o M. S. Mill Company
286 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Miss Graff:

The notices and reviews of your book, PETUNIA PUMP, promise us a most delightful novel this spring. We are looking forward to reading a copy, but at present we write to you regarding the Maine Author Collection.

This is an exhibit of over a thousand volumes, written by people born in Maine, residing here, or writing about the state. The books are inscribed, presentation copies, and are of course a fascinating array. Their future value is great, and we are constantly pleased by the friendly interest shown in the project by our authors.

From the background of PETUNIA PUMP, we suspect that it may be possible for us to claim you as a Maine author; and we certainly hope this will be the case, for PETUNIA PUMP would be a charming addition to the collection.

Please accept our congratulations upon the publication of your novel, and our best wishes for its success.

Very truly yours

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SECRETARY
6939 Emken Street
Germantown
Pennsylvania

My dear Mrs. Jacob:

Thank you for your very kind letter which was forwarded by Mr. Mill. What an exciting idea it is - for your library to collect Maine stories or stories written by Maine people!

For about twenty years my friend, Miss Thorne, and I have spent most of our summers in or near Camden, and to return there is exactly like going home. We love every inch of Maine; it has become an integral part of us. I shall therefore feel happily honored if, after reading "Petunia Pump", you
decide that it is worthy of being placed in your Maine Author Collection. This collection Miss Thorne and I feel that we must see; we have already determined to drive to Augusta some time during the summer.

An autographed copy of "Felumia Pump" is being sent by parcel post. Please understand how very much I appreciate your good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Irvine Groff

April 26, 1941
May 13, 1941

Miss Irvine Graff
6434 Emlen Street
Germantown, Pennsylvania

Dear Miss Graff:

Seldom do we have the pleasure of adding to the Maine Author Collection a novel of such charm and typically Maine character as your delightful PETUNIA PUMP.

We wondered, when we read the first review, if it could be that Camden's street light flowers had been transplanted to a pump; and perhaps it is so, since you write that you spend your summers in Camden. At any rate, we found Rikk and her lovely "patchwork family" irresistible; and with gratitude for the author's generosity, and enjoyment of the truth of character, setting and speech in the book, we welcome the inclusion of PETUNIA PUMP. May it have a fitting success.

Please accept our most cordial invitation to visit us next summer. We would be glad indeed of the opportunity to show you this exhibit, and also of expressing our appreciation personally.

Very truly yours

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SECRETARY
My dear Mrs. Jacob:

I cannot remember when I have received a letter so inspiring as yours. It delights me, of course, that you like the story of "Petunia Pump"; but even more satisfying is your criticism: "truth of character, setting and speech." This means a great deal to me.

It may interest you to know that in Lincolville Centre, about seven miles from Camden, there
really is a village pump-house like the one Mr. Mill pictures on the cover of the book. In fact, it was copied from a sketch. For years that pump at Lincolnville Centre has symbolized for my friend and me a simplicity and a security of existence which are cheering. Last September, however, when we went to say farewell to the pump, we were consternated to find it uprooted. On the ground were lying the petunia boxes, empty and forlorn. We lacked the courage to inquire about the matter in the village store and have been wondering ever since if the dismantling meant repair work only or if pump and pump-house have really vanished.

Thank you for returning the postage on the book. Thank you, too, for your interest and your invitation
to visit the Maine State Library. Miss Thorne and I certainly hope to see you some time during the summer.

Sincerely yours,

Irvine Graff