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Moreton Graves Abbott Correspondence

Moreton Graves Abbott

Marion Cobb Fuller

Maine State Library

Hilda McLeod

Maine State Library

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Moreton G. Abbott, Rumford pianist and teacher, is the author of a child's piano method which is shortly to be published by G. Schirmer, Inc., of New York. The book will have a preface by Ernest Schelling, director of the concerts for young people and children which the New York Philharmonic gives each season. Mr. Schelling, now in his Swiss home at Garengo, Celigny, on Lake Geneva, where his estate borders that of Paderewski's, his teacher and intimate friend, has praised the book highly and has given the preface to Mr. Abbott as a result. The little volume, containing about 60 pages of text and music, is a child's first piano book and bears the amusing title "Beginner's Luck." It is being illustrated by Albert Poye of New York, who has met much success with his drawings for children. The music and text are the result of Mr. Abbott's experience as a popular and successful teacher of children, and embody several new and attractive features, the simplest and most unusual being that, except for a brief foreword, there is not a word for teachers in the entire book.

Mr. Abbott believes that instructions to teachers generally detract from the usefulness of a child's piano method which is intended for the child. He calls them "asides," and feels that such "asides" are usually more annoying than helpful. He has endeavored, in "Beginner's Luck," to present his ideas simply and logically; in language children can easily understand. "If well written," Mr. Abbott says, "there is no reason why a child's book should not be readily understood by adults—even teachers." A world famous pedagogue has called Mr. Abbott's book "a real contribution to educational literature." Mr. Abbott, who believes that music teachers generally devote too much thought to music and not enough to children, has aimed to present his material in a not-too-serious fashion. In spite of this, Mr. Abbott is a firm believer in the classics for children. At a recent recital in New York, Mr. Schelling gave an excellent performance of some of the finest piano music, including works by Chopin, Schubert, and Beethoven, which he has taught to his students.
September 19, 1932

Mr. Moreton G. Abbott,
Rumford Falls, Maine

Dear Mr. Abbott:

We note in the September fifteenth issue of the Rumford Falls Times an item about your forthcoming book, *Beginner's Luck*. We are always interested in writing or other creative work done by Maine persons and we try to keep in touch with them. Are you a native of Maine? If you are, will you please send us biographical information about yourself so that we may have it on file here. Perhaps you would like to send us an autographed copy of your book for our Maine Author Collection, which is an exhibit collection of the works of Maine authors, the books all autographed and inscribed by the writers. I shall be glad to mention your book in our Library Bulletin.

Very truly yours
Rumford Public Library
Rumford, Maine

May 2, 1933

My dear Miss Bisbee:

Can you tell us anything about a music book by a Rumford musician, Moreton G. Abbott, announced for publication last fall? The title of it is "Beginners Luck". Is the author a native of Maine?

Very truly yours,

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY MCF

I wrote to Mr. Abbott last fall but my letter was not answered.

Mrs. Bisbee of the library gave me your letter, and I may as well answer it myself. The music book you are so kindly interested in will not be published until this June. I will send you a copy if you would like it, but I am not a native of Maine. I was born in Vermont, but have lived in Maine most of my life. I did not answer your letter to me when it was received because I wanted to wait until the book was actually published. It was larger than I had expected.

Very sincerely,

Moreton G. Abbott
Rumford, Maine,  
August 19, 1933.

Maine State Library,  
Augusta, Maine.  
Miss Marion Cobb Fuller.

Dear Miss Fuller:

Under separate cover I am sending you a copy of my child's piano book, "Beginner's Luck", which I have autographed for your collection of books by Maine people. Although, as I wrote you some time ago, I was born in Vermont, I have lived my entire life, except for a few months, in Maine and practically all of that time in Rumford. Would you send me a copy of the Library Bulletin which contains mention of my book?

Very sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Morton Grau Abbott
August 22, 1933

Mr. Moreton Graves Abbott,
Rumford, Maine
My dear Mr. Abbott:

Thank you for the autographed copy of your child's piano book, "Beginner's Luck", which you have so generously sent to the Maine Author Collection. It is a charming thing and I am sure that every child who receives it will be delighted by it. We are very glad to have such an attractive item to add to our Maine Author (and Musician) Collection.

As I probably explained in my preceding letter, the Maine Author Collection is an exhibition collection of the work of persons born in Maine or resident here during their creative years. We include in the collection the work of composers and we welcome additions to the musical section of the collection.

I shall be delighted to send you a copy of the next issue of our Library Bulletin. It is due in January and I trust that nothing will prevent its publication.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) MCF
December 22, 1936

Mr. Moreton G. Abbott
Rumford
Maine

Dear Mr. Abbott:

We notice that although you presented the Maine Author Collection with a copy of your splendid beginners' book, BEGINNER'S LUCK, in 1933, we have no biographical information on file concerning you.

We deeply appreciate the kindness and generosity of our Maine authors and composers in presenting to this collection inscribed copies of their work, and we try always to have on file some material of a biographical nature.

We have been unsuccessful in our search for this sort of information about you, and are now appealing to you, hoping that you will be willing to write for us a few paragraphs of this nature. We would like significant dates, education, profession — anything of interest that occurs to you.

We extend greetings and best wishes of the season.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY

[Signature]

SECRETARY
February 23, 1937

Mr. Moreton G. Abbott
80 Mount Vernon Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Abbott:

We have received your second piano book, STEPPING TONES, and we are very glad to add this to the Maine Author Collection. Thank you for remembering us.

It is a delightful book, and one that certainly should stimulate any child's interest in the piano with its attractive illustrations, and easy, friendly directions. Teachers, also, must welcome this lively departure from the staid exercises that most of us recall!

Thank you again for the bright and interesting STEPPING TONES, and we hope that some day we may make the acquaintance of the originator of these thoroughly enjoyable piano books.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

SECRETARY
Nov. 17 '39

Maine State Library,
Augusta.

Dear Sirs;

Some years ago I sent you a copy of "Beginner's Luck", a child's music book, which you wished for your Maine Authors' Collection. I wonder if you have a second book, "Stepping Tones", published since then, and four pieces of sheet music by me. If you do not have these I would like to send them to add to the book you already have. Would you kindly let me know?

Very truly yours,

Morton Graves Abbott
November 18, 1939

Mr. Moreton Graves Abbott  
Abbottsfield  
Oxford, Maine  

Dear Mr. Abbott:

You are very kind to remember the Maine Author Collection, and to offer us your second book, STEPPING TONES.

We are happy to be able to report that we are so fortunate as to have both your books, which were presented by you some time ago. They are a valued part of the collection, and not only do we appreciate your generosity in giving them to the exhibit, but also we are very grateful for your thoughtfulness in writing to us at the present time.

Very truly yours  

MAINE STATE LIBRARY  
BY  

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SECRETARY