September 2015

Joseph Cummings Chase Correspondence

Joseph Cummings Chase 1878-1965

Hilda McLeod Jacob

Maine State Library

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CHASE, Joseph Cummings

b. Kents Hill, Maine, 1878
Dear Mr. Chase:

Congratulations on your new book, MY FRIENDS LOOK BETTER THAN EVER. We have ordered a copy for the library, and look forward to its arrival with eagerness. The host of people who enjoyed MY FRIENDS LOOK GOOD TO ME will welcome the new volume warmly.

It is odd and regrettable that your books are not in the Maine Author Collection. Do you know of this permanent exhibit of the writing of Maine people? It was begun thirty years ago, and includes about two thousand volumes, inscribed presentation copies for the most part. The inscriptions are as varied as the books -- pen-and-ink sketches, bits of verse, an autobiographical anecdote, a tribute to the State of Maine -- and all lend distinction and added value to an outstanding collection which constantly attracts the attention of visitors and students. It is our intention that the books of all Maine people shall be here, permanently preserved, available for consultation by anyone interested in Maine's contribution to literature.

We hope that you may want to inscribe your books and present them for inclusion in the collection. They would be happy and notable additions.

You have our very good wishes for the immediate and enduring success of MY FRIENDS LOOK BETTER THAN EVER, and our cordial invitation to call at the library, and see the Maine Author Collection when you are in Maine.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
Dear Hilda McLeod Jacob:

Thank you for your kind letter of December 15th.

Perhaps the new book will be the more properly located in your library, since it contains a reproduction of your portrait of Gene Powers and a story about the painting of it.

Authorship is not a hobby of this portrait painter, but once in a while publishers have sort-of demanded something, and when I'm stuck with a task I try to carry-on. It all began a long way back when the Editor of SatEvePost demanded three articles. I shied away from the idea, but finally said I'd try. I knew I couldn't write anything the Post would print. Two weeks later a telegram from Lorimer (Tuesday a.m.) read, YOUR FIRST ARTICLE MUST BE IN OUR OFFICE FRIDAY MORNING 7000 WORDS. I handed the messenger boy a telegram to Lorimer: I DON'T KNOW 7000 WORDS AND IF I DID I COULDN'T SPELL 'EM. Half an hour later another from Lorimer: YOU WRITE 'EM WE'LL SPELL 'EM. That's how I got stuck with it.

When World War shaped up, the Government asked publishers to ask their authors to permit the lead of their books to be melted. I agreed, and all the previous books are "out of print."

"Creative Design and "An Artist Talks About Color" had been running along for many years. Now once in a while I'm able to get a copy of one of the books from a second-hand-book store. If any of them should turn up, I will be happy to send them to you. It is a promise.

Those several articles for The Post were asked for by a book publisher and appeared under the title, THE ROMANCE OF AN ART CAREER. Ever since publishers have been suggesting. Sometimes I've done what they've asked for. That's the story.

With appreciation,

January 22, 1951.
March 29, 1951

Mr. Joseph Cummings Chase  
15 Gramercy Park  
New York City 3  

Dear Mr. Chase:

After your friendly letter of January 22, 23 started searching for your early books. We have been able to secure MY FRIENDS LOOK GOOD TO ME, and we shall not need to ask for your inscription, since this copy already bears one. It is being placed in the Maine Author Collection.

We still hope that you may want to inscribe and present to this collection the new one, MY FRIENDS LOOK BETTER THAN EVER; and we shall continue to look for the older titles.

Meanwhile it is encouraging to have a start!

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of  
Maine Author Collection
Mr. Joseph Cummings Chase  
15 Gramercy Park  
New York City 3

Dear Mr. Chase:

The inscribed copy of MY FRIENDS LOOK BETTER THAN EVER arrived this morning, and it is with a great deal of pleasure that we add it to the Maine Author Collection.

It is a distinctive volume, a fascinating one, and does much to prove again the versatility of Maine people: you can not only paint, but also write!

Thank you very much indeed for the exhibit copy.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of  
Maine Author Collection
March 26, 1963

Mr. Joseph Cummings Chase
15 Gramercy Park
New York City 3

Dear Mr. Chase:

Your new book, PACE VALUE, sounds wonderful, and of course we added it to our order list at once. We anticipate seeing a copy soon.

We hope that your past generosity to the Maine Author Collection will render you agreeable to inscribing and presenting a copy of FACE VALUE for this purpose. Your earlier writing is represented here, and we should very much like to have the new volume included.

Good luck to it.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
April 8, 1963

Mr. Joseph Cummings Chase  
2228 East Woodstock Place  
Milwaukee 2, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Chase:

Thank you so much for the delightfully inscribed copy of FACE VALUE. It is added to the Maine Author Collection with appreciation, not only for the gift and for your interest, and for the buoyant pages of your writing, but also for the claim Maine has upon you, and the proud satisfaction we have in your life of experience and achievement. As you say, the Maine birthright is a tough one to alter!

May your zest and your palette continue unabated for a long, long time.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of  
Maine Author Collection