September 2015

Nancy Hale Correspondence

Nancy Hale 1908-1988

Anna Westcott Hale 1908-1988

Nancy Hale Wertenbaker 1908-1988

Hilda McLeod

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HALE, Nancy
October 22, 1935

Miss Nancy Hale  
Charles Scribner's Sons  
597 Fifth Avenue  
New York City  

Dear Miss Hale:

Recently we read an article concerning you and your work, and realized with dismay that we had not acquired a copy of NEVER ANY MORE for our Maine Author Collection. This is an exhibit collection of the works of contemporary Maine Authors, and includes books with a Maine setting, as well as those of writers actually born in Maine. For this reason, in addition to the fact that it was a splendid book and one of last season's most popular, we are ordering a copy, which the publishers will doubtless forward to you. We hope that you will be kind enough to inscribe this copy of NEVER ANY MORE for us, and we assure you we will appreciate your kindness.

Very truly yours  
Maine State Library

Secretary
October 22, 1935

Miss Nancy Hale  
c/o Charles Scribners' Sons  
New York City

Dear Miss Hale:

Thank you for inscribing NEVER ANY MORE, and forwarding it to us for our Maine Author Collection. We appreciate your interest and kindness, and assure you we are delighted to add this book to the Collection.

We hope when you are in Maine that you will visit us some day, so that you may know the Maine Author Collection, and we may better know you. Our best wishes are yours for continued literary success.

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

Im  
Secretary
Nancy Hale, Descendant Of Literary Celebrities 
Herself a Popular Author

Because she is a New England author, granddaughter of Edward Everett Hale, and author of a book, many of whose scenes were laid on an island off the Maine coast, ("Never Any More," one of last season's "best sellers" and reviewed in these columns) the following excerpts from "The Boston Transcript" will be of interest to Maine readers. It is by Henry Sal­pert.

When I first saw Nancy Hale, and in the circumstances under which I first saw her, I thought of her as Diana in a newspaper office, for there was in her first glance the calm, grave, remote spirit of the fabled huntress. One could not perhaps tell right away that there was a glow in her spirit which could quite thaw out that first impression of cool remoteness. It might say that Nancy Hale is a double contradiction, and that without respect to her sex; she is not only a lovely author, contradiction enough, but she is also a lovely newswoman which can hardly be counted a handicap ev­en on The New York Times.

The young and present presence of Miss Hale is a joyous suggestion of the future, not an evocation from the past. Her name and the ancestry of Miss Hale have been of precious significance to New England, no less to Boston particularly. Whether she reads the classics or not, whether her future books take her further away from her roots than her past books have, her roots spiritual and moral and intellectual, are in Old New England.

The moment you learn that Edward Everett Hale was her grandfather, and that in her inheritance there is a blend of the Everetts and Hales and links of association with the Beechers and the Stowe—Har­riet Beecher Stowe was her great-aunt—why then the name Nancy Hale loses the pert and bright connotations, when you see it at the bottom of a little sketch in "The New Yorker," or at the top of a page in the no less fashionable "Vanity Fair," or even in the more sober and serious Scribner's. Rich, as she may be in inheritance and in culture, in herself she is an untrammeled crea­ture, seeking to create her own valuation, attempting to understand the present, to make terms with it and to conquer it.

She is only 25, an age at which many young men and women are still floundering about. She has marked her clarity and is hewing close to the line of her serious intention. She is a wife and the mother of a son moving about the fifth birthday. She is therefore in her fiction no air plant, but rather the human concerns of womanhood. She is the author of two novels, "The Young Die Good" and "Any More," the latter only recently published and most favorably received. As a short-story writer she is practically the only one of two parts; the first, before she read the introduction to Lewisohn's "Expression in America"; the second, after she read that chapter.

The stories she wrote after reading that book were far better than the stories she wrote before. "Expression in America" and the introductory chapter particularly, made for real "the sensation of dormancy in myself." He made her real­ize, she says, that writing should be expression, not trivial; that it must have meaning and significance for the man or woman who does the writing; that it must belong to, and spring from, the psyche of the writer.

Altho Miss Hale has been living and working in New York and environs for the past six years and more, she regards herself as a Bostonian, and she refreshes that which is Bostonian within her by making flying trips to her home city.

It is a little astonishing, as it is refreshing, to hear a young woman in a New York newspaper office sound the alarm, so to speak, for a recognition of the return to the tradition of Boston when the Puritans and the sons of the Puritans were the masters of the day.

In 25 years, an age in which the correspondence of the grandparents of the present generation of Bostonians, even if they knew nothing about the history of the time, could fail to be impressed, said Miss Hale, with the sense of activity which those letters convey. They show, she continued, that people were concerned, with what was happening, with af­fairs and with literature. People cared then, they don't care now. Then it is, she said, the usual thing for all the members of a family to be ac­tive in a cause, serving a party, contributing to discussion from pulpit book, or periodical. If in the past every member of a family was in public office it was taken as a matter of course; nowadays, according to her diagnosis, if only one member of a family is doing some­thing, that fact seems to be cause for congratulation by every other member of the family.

Leviston Journal
July 27, 1935