KELLY, Eric P. Kelly
born Amesbury, Massachusetts, March 16, 1884.
Eric Kelly Makes Maine Island His Permanent Home

Eric Kelly, author of numerous books for children whose "Trumpeter of Krakow" was awarded the Newberry Prize several years ago, has adopted Maine for his home and makes his year-round residence at Chebeague Island in Casco Bay. A native of Massachusetts and professor of journalism at Dartmouth College, Mr. Kelly has been on leave of absence from the college during the war, working on the problem of Polish immigration to Mexico and working at his island home on several new books.

Life on a Maine island has many appealing advantages, Mr. Kelly says, for while it's cooler there in the summer, it's likewise warmer with less snow in the winter. Quite a colony of artists and retired professional folk is growing up on Chebeague and all the new residents are concerned in island affairs. Improvement of town schools, which come under the jurisdiction of Cumberland, is the immediate project, Mr. Kelly explains.

About his plans for the future, Mr. Kelly is still undecided. He is scheduled to return to Dartmouth in the fall of 1946, but thus far has made no definite arrangements about his duties there.

In a recent talk before the school librarians attending the teachers' convention in Portland, Mr. Kelly reviewed his method of writing. It's necessary, he feels, to make a habit of writing and to keep at some sort of production till the mind is ready to function along the desired lines. There is no point in an author trying to keep office hours, he says, for if he does he will soon be turning out material by the yard, with no attention to the quality.

Mr. Kelly recalls his early years of writing when he was producing children's stories for the Old Youth's Companion, a publication whose demise he deplores. There was a certain formula for those stories, for within a certain number of words the author had to get his characters into certain dilemmas and out again.

Newspaper training is excellent background for literary work, Mr. Kelly finds, and quotes from his own experience in reporting, where he acquired the habit of regular writing and quick judgment. Making the transfer to creative writing, a man quickly develops his own technique without which his stories will have no value.

There is something "soul-satisfying" Mr. Kelly finds in writing for young people. Although he has written on many subjects, his greatest interest in Poland, its history and traditions, about which he was developed some of the outstanding books offered for young readers.

One knows, he explains, that one must reach his reader. In speaking it is possible to feel audience reaction, but in writing a book one must depend on his own sensitivity to help him determine how his book will affect readers.

Two kinds of writing are presented to the reader; mechanical writing wherein the author borrows from others and the creative, when the author must detach himself from the world and wait and hope for success. The former is the work of a clever man, and few good authors are clever, Mr. Kelly says.

Each writer must develop his own technique which becomes a rather mechanical apparatus to hold his story together. Mr. Kelly says he always sees a book in sixteen chapters, with the climatic action occurring somewhere in the middle and another climax toward the conclusion.

Good writing is collecting evidence to make a good impression, and each chapter must have different emphasis. People are the author's greatest creation and Mr. Kelly finds it difficult to tell how character creation starts. The author must go around with his head in the clouds until finally the confusion is dispelled and the satisfactory character emerges.

With an eye to a happy future world, Mr. Kelly bases his hopes on youth who must be imbued with belief in human nature with emphasis on the heroic, must have strong faith in their country's aims and a desire to see true Democracy win.

Lewiston Evening Journal

November 10, 1945
November 20, 1935

Prof. Eric P. Kelly
Dartmouth College
Hanover, N. H.

Dear Sir:

May we congratulate you upon the achievement of the authentic treatment which you have accorded the exciting story of Philip in THREE SIDES OF AGIOOHOOK, which is enjoying fresh popularity each day. Books of this type are a distinctly beneficial contribution to the juvenile literature of today.

Having noticed with pleasure that you are a summer resident of Great Chebeague Island, we think possibly you may be interested to learn of the Maine Author Collection. This is an exhibit collection of the works of contemporary Maine authors, and includes not only those writers born in Maine, but also those who write of Maine, or who have lived in this State. Started several years ago, this collection now numbers several hundred inscribed volumes, most of them contributed by our very cooperative authors. It gives us pleasure to discover another famous name that we may include in this list of writers.

We assure you that we would be delighted to add THREE SIDES OF AGIOOHOOK to the Maine Author Collection, should you care to inscribe for us a copy. May we wish you continued success in the literary field, and again congratulate you upon the present success of your latest book.

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

Secreatary
December 16, 1935

Prof. Eric P. Kelly
Dartmouth College
Hanover, N. H.

Dear Mr. Kelly:

THREE SIDES OF AGIOCHOOK has arrived, and we send our most sincere thanks to you for this splendid addition to our Maine Author Collection. You are indeed to be congratulated upon giving to the young people of today such thrilling and yet authentic pictures of the past. We are proud that we have a claim, however slight, to the author of this book, and we add it proudly to our collection.

Please accept our very sincere wishes for success, and the greetings of the season.

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

hm  Secretary