November 2015

Joseph Romani Correspondence

Joseph Romani Rev.

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ROMANI, Joseph

b. Turin, Italy
May 19, 1955

Rev. Joseph Romani
76 Federal Street
Portland, Maine

Dear Father Romani:

News of the publication of your first novel, SOMETHING TO LIFE FOR, is pleasant indeed; and we look forward to seeing a copy soon. We are especially interested to learn that it has a Portland background, and we wonder whether we may claim you as a native Maine author.

We shall note the publication in the Maine in Print list of the Bulletin of the Maine Library Association, and we hope that the Maine Author Collection may be graced by the inclusion of an inscribed copy. Do you know about this collection? It is a permanent exhibit of Maine writing, and most of the books are inscribed presentation copies. The inscriptions are varied and original, and a source of delight to the constant students and visitors. It is always a happy occasion to be able to welcome a new name and a new book, and to begin to gather information about an author, for we try to have biographical as well as review material on file. Will you help us on the biographical part?

Our very good wishes go to you for the success of SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
Dear Miss Jacob:

Thank you for taking notice of my publication.

I am sending you an autographed copy for the purposes you have mentioned and I assure you that I am proud to be listed among the Maine Authors, but, as you read in the back cover, I am not a native of Maine, though a naturalized citizen. If that does not disqualify me for your collection, I am doubly proud to belong in it.

As to more detailed biographical notes, I should prefer to wait until I produce something better from the literary point of view.

When I sent this manuscript to New York, I asked the publisher to give it a look and tell me if I was on the right track, intending to re-write the entire story if publishable. Instead they sent me the contract and I have yet to see the manuscript. Anyone with a refined literary taste notices the shoddy way I massed my material, so I don't want to brag about this first job.

I can say that as many as have read it, except the professors, have liked the story, but I am not satisfied till also the professors praise my work.

So, if you don't mind, for the present refrain from mentioning me as an author for which Maine can boast. I expect to make the boast good in the near future. That is also the reason why my biographical notice makes no reference to me as a Reverend. I did not wish to call for disparaging comments on me as a clergyman. I will afford it better when well established.

Hoping to be of some service to you, I remain,

Sincerely Yours,

Joseph Romani
Rev. Joseph Romani
76 Federal Street
Portland 3, Maine

Dear Father Romani:

What a very friendly letter! And how glad we are to welcome the autographed copy of your first novel, SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR, into the Maine Author Collection.

As you describe the history of this book, we can understand why you are conscious of shortcomings, and a desire to polish the edges, so to speak. Your candor and self-appraisal are refreshing. Judging by many first novels, however, we think there is still cause for congratulations. It is a sincere book, portraying difficulties which so often beset ordinary people; and you have developed the story with restraint and sympathy.

We wish that we might claim you as a Maine native, but we shall have to resign ourselves to calling you an "adopted" author. We have many eminent writers, whom we admire greatly, who are adopted -- Laura E. Richards, Ben Ames Williams, Gladys Hasty Carroll, Henry Beston and Elizabeth Coatsworth, for instance; so you see, you are in excellent company.

The Maine in Print list will carry notice of SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR, but we will respect your wishes, and not mention that you are a priest. Perhaps this will come as a happy surprise later, when the second book is published. All good wishes to the first.

Sincerely yours

hmj

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