January 2016

Willard Wallace Correspondence

Willard Mosher Wallace 1911-

Maine State Library

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalmaine.com/maine_writers_correspondence

Recommended Citation
Wallace, Willard Mosher 1911- and Maine State Library, "Willard Wallace Correspondence" (2016). Maine Writers Correspondence. 689.
http://digitalmaine.com/maine_writers_correspondence/689

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by the Maine State Library Special Collections at Maine State Documents. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Writers Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Maine State Documents. For more information, please contact statedocs@maine.gov.
WALLACE, Willard M.

b. South Portland  1911
April 3, 1951

Dr. Willard M. Wallace
Wesleyan University
Middletown, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Wallace:

Congratulations on your new book, APPEAL TO ARMS. We placed it on our order list at once, for it seemed the kind of book which we would use frequently in our reference work, and which would be popular with the general reader as well.

We are especially interested to learn that you are a Maine man. We shall mention the book in the next issue of the Bulletin of the Maine Library Association. It is always a delight to be able to welcome another writer to the ranks of Maine authors.

Do you know of the Maine Author Collection? It was started some years ago, and now consists of about two thousand volumes, written by Maine people, those resident here, or written about the state. The books are inscribed presentation volumes, and are an impressive reminder of Maine's contribution to literature. The inscriptions are valuable and fascinating; and students and visitors are constantly attracted by the remarkable exhibit. This is entirely separate from the general lending section, and is a permanent exhibit, the only one where all the works of all Maine authors are gathered together.

We hope that you will want to inscribe and present a copy of APPEAL TO ARMS for this purpose. It would give us great pleasure to include it. Meanwhile, you have our best wishes for its immediate and enduring success.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

hmj
July 6, 1951

Mrs. F. W. Jacob
Maine State Library
State House
Augusta
Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

I was horrified, in looking over some recent correspondence, to discover that I never acknowledged your very kind letter of April 3 with its invitation to contribute to the Maine Author Collection. Please accept my sincere apology—somehow, in the pressure of work, the letter was overlooked.

I shall be proud and happy to contribute to the Collection. I had not heard of it, but it sounds like an excellent idea. I am requesting Harper to send me a copy of my book at once, and will inscribe it and mail it to you as soon as it arrives.

Thank you for your good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Willard M. Wallace
August 19, 1951

Mrs. F. W. Jacob
Maine State Library
State House
Augusta, Maine

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

I have just returned from vacation to find that a copy of my book has at last arrived from Harper. It goes off to you as soon as I can pack it.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

William M. Wallace
August 24, 1951

Dr. Willard M. Wallace
Wesleyan University
Middletown, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Wallace:

It was with pleasure that we welcomed the arrival of APPEAL TO ARMS this morning, and with especial delight that we read the inscription. Thank you very much, for your friendly letters, for the presentation copy of your book to the Maine Author Collection, and above all for writing such a capable and yet interesting account of this part of American history. It is a book which captures the attention of the general reader, as well as the specialist, and we feel that its value will endure.

We hope that other volumes will follow. History need not be fictionalized to be rendered agreeable to the average reader, but a chronicle which flows swiftly and observantly as yours does arouses and maintains interest; and more histories of this sort would be indeed welcome.

You have our appreciative thanks for the collection copy of APPEAL TO ARMS, and our cordial invitation to call at the library when you are in this vicinity.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
Books and Authors

Soul of the Lion

Lt. Gen. U.S. Grant was so impressed by Chamberlain's feat that he promoted him on the spot to brigadier-general. History records that this was the only promotion Grant ever gave on the field of battle.

Chamberlain's military career reached a climax in the siege of Petersburg, the extending movements of Grant to cut Robert E. Lee's escape route to the south, and in the final push to Appomattox Court House. He was chosen for the signal honor of accepting the surrender of the Confederate infantry after the surrender.

Following his discharge, Chamberlain was four times chosen by the Republicans as their candidate for Governor, and four times he was elected for one year terms between 1867 and 1870.

The eventful life of one of Maine's "most noble sons," Joshua L. Chamberlain—general, war hero, Governor, college president and businessman—has finally been set forth in a biography he well deserves.

As the publishers correctly point out, this biography of the "Hero of Little Round Top" at the Battle of Gettysburg fills a long-standing void in the biographical literature of the Civil War and Reconstruction period.

All other notable figures of the Civil War, and some not so notable, have been rewarded with full-length biographies. Chamberlain, who wrote well himself but never left his memoirs, has never been so honored and his admirers have had to wait for close to 50 years for a complete biography. Chamberlain was probably one of the Pine Tree State's most memorable figures in an era which produced James G. Blaine, Senator and Governor; Lot M. Morrill, and Sen. William Pitt Fessenden.

A Brewer native, Chamberlain entered Bowdoin in 1848 and made a notable record as a student. Following his graduation he completed his training in the ministry at the Bangor Theological Seminary. He returned to Bowdoin in 1855 and taught logic and natural theology, and rhetoric and oratory until 1862 when he answered the call to arms at the outbreak of the Civil War. He went to the front as lieutenant colonel of the 20th Maine Regiment.

He led the regiment at Little Round Top on the critical second day of the Battle of Gettysburg and won a Medal of Honor for his gallant leadership in holding the left flank of Vincent's Brigade. These forces repulsed the best efforts of the Confederates to take the bloody knoll, and saved the left anchor of the Union battle line.

Modest, Chamberlain never carried favor with his superiors, many of them Regular Army officers who looked with disfavor on volunteer officers, or with politicians who could have pushed his advancement in Washington. As a result he did not rise in rank quickly and did not become a brigadier-general until mid-1864 before Petersburg when he was seriously wounded while personally leading his regiment into battle.

In 1900 he was appointed by President William McKinley as surveyor of the Port of Portland, a job he fulfilled excellently. His war wounds began to take their toll after the beginning of the century and in February, 1914, at the age of 85, he died at Portland. He is buried in the Pine Grove cemetery in Brunswick in the section nearest the Bowdoin campus. For a man who was a major general in the Union Army, Governor of Maine and president of Bowdoin College, his grave stone bears only the brief and simple inscription: Joshua L. Chamberlain, 1828-1914.

Wallace's biography does credit to the man. The research has been thorough—he has even used the files of the old Lewiston Evening Journal—and his method of presentation is clear.

The author does not get carried away with Chamberlain's military career and rightly devotes considerable space to his fine post-war occupations as governor and Bowdoin president. Through the use of family letters and Chamberlain's numerous speeches, Wallace presents rewarding insights into Chamberlain's character, his thought and views on countless subjects, from education to marriage.

The biography certainly fills a gap on the Civil War shelf of a person's library and should be read by everyone who wants to become acquainted with a striking figure in Maine post-Civil War period.

Wallace, a native of South Portland, is currently an instructor in history at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. He has written several other books dealing with colonial America.

M. B. P.
His Mission Was Gettysburg

Kennebec Journal, September 28, 1960

Gen. Josh Chamberlain Subject Of New Book

By RUTH HENDERSON

Life of Gen. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, whose defense of Little Round Top turned the tide at Gettysburg and thus saved the Union, is told in an interesting, gratifying, appealing story by Willard M. Wallace, Maine native and Wesleyan University professor of history.

Everything written concerning the Civil War era, with the centennial years approaching, is of special appeal to today's readers. Wallace is making an outstanding contribution in bringing to his readers the life of this remarkable man through his book entitled Soul of the Lion, recently off the press.

Last big gap in Civil War biographies is spanned in this first published story of the truly great Chamberlain. Through a long source of information, family friends, archives, Wallace has made his way in the construction of the story of Gen. Chamberlain.

Summation of the life of this gallant man is aptly expressed in the words of Gen. Horatio G. Sickels to Gen. Chamberlain: "General, you have the soul of the lion and the heart of a woman."

CHAMBERLAIN was to be a missionary according to the wishes of his strong-minded mother. After graduating from Bowdoin he attended Bangor Theological Seminary. At outbreak of the Civil War he was teaching at Bowdoin and in face of protests from faculty and family he expressed desire to do his part.

The 20th Maine Volunteers was formed, when on Aug. 2, 1862, Chamberlain was offered the lieutenant colonelcy of that outfit. The book is devoted to those last months of the Civil War and the author gives a vivid, graphic word picture of the battles, the long, tired marches, the bloody encounters. Many line drawings depict crucial phases of battles, adding much to the reader's grasp of the story herefore little known except by the military and by historians.

"Great fighting general" truly types Chamberlain, always in the thick of the fray. He led always with compassion for his men and a vast understanding of the military, the strategy and the foresee to out-think the opposite.

He was wounded critically at Petersburg and was given the rare experience of reading his own obituary written by the Army along with the order promoting him to brigadier general. He recovered to again carry his men on to further victories.

The greatness of Gen. Chamberlain was again shown when he was designated to receive surrender of Lee's forces. He ordered the Union ranks to attention and to go marching salute to the war worn Confederates.

After the war Chamberlain returned home to be elected governor of his native Maine. His failure to be re-elected after four terms was accredited to fact he did not adhere to party policies, was not an active politician and he was an advocate of capital punishment. He returned as president of Bowdoin and worked for an expanded curriculum and military training. Both issues proved highly controversial.

In 1879, when the Fusionists came into the picture, Chamberlain advised Gov. Garconel to let the Court decide the election issue. He was asked to return to Augusta and take command of the situation, refusing to recognize a governor until the Court decided. It was the following year a mob threatened to kill him as he stood guard at the State House. The stamina that marked his Civil War days was there as he told the mob he was there to see that the laws of the state were put into effect and if anyone wanted to kill him for it, here he was.

Chamberlain closed his life of service by acting as post surveyor at Portland. His was truly an inspiring life. The author tells it with clarity, veracity and understanding.

First Biography About Joshua Chamberlain

Lewiston Journal 10/28/60

(Thomas Nelson & Sons, N. Y.) ($5)

Many experts on Civil War history agree on two things. The first is that the Battle of Gettysburg was the decisive battle of the war. The second is that a great Oregon man, Gen. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain was the man who converted Gettysburg into a victory as a result of his heroism and brilliant maneuvering on Little Round Top.

It is pleasing that finally a first biography has been written of this foremost Maine military man and later president of Bowdoin College and Governor of Maine. Gen. Horatio G. Sickels said to Chamberlain: "General, you have the soul of the lion and the heart of a woman."

The biography by Willard M. Wallace is recommended too highly. All Maine people should read it, as they not only will learn of this monumental figure in the State's history, but also will learn much of history itself. — P. P.

"THE RAIDERS" recounts the adventures of Maine-bred Navy Lieutenant Scott Pettigrew, beginning with his assignment to serve as naval attaché in London.

On the voyage there he encounters the beautiful southern spy, Tamara Ravenel, and her sinister companion, Roger Clavering — with whom he will match wits until both southern agents are killed, Tamara in the futile attempt of the ship "Challenger" to run the Union blockade, and Clavering during the siege of Fort Fisher.

In London Pettigrew is ordered to assist in the surveillance of the construction of Number 290 at Laird Yards in Liverpool. Despite the efforts of Union emissaries in England, however, the 290 is transformed into the dreaded "Alabama," commanded by Captain Raphael Semmes. In desperation Pettigrew spirits himself aboard to take his place as a member of the crew.

Eventually fleeing the vessel, Pettigrew returns to the United States and is given duty as a naval courier. He undertakes several exciting missions and is present at the showdown between the "Alabama" and the "Kearsarge" of Cherbourg in June, 1864.

This book should be of special interest to Maine readers because so much of the action involves Maine people and places. Portlanders will, for example, relive the famous chase of the "Caleb Cushing" and the ship's subsequent sinking.

Willard M. Wallace, a native of South Portland and now Professor of History at Wesleyan University, has written a fast-moving novel buttressed with solid historical research.

For the history buff there is a historical and bibliographical note, including a discussion of the disputed Edouard Manet painting of the battle between the "Alabama" and the "Kearsarge."