

April 2016

Loring Eugene Williams Correspondence

Maine State Library

Loring Eugene Williams 1897-

W. Paul Quarrington

Elmer Rogers

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WILLIAMS, Loring Eugene

South Berwick, Maine

March 15, 1937

Mr. Loring Eugene Williams
1665 East 73rd Street
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mr. Williams:

References noticed in Mr. Adelbert Jakeman's letters and writings lead us to write to you regarding your annual anthology, AMERICA SINGING. We understand that you are a South Berwick "native," and this immediately interests us.

Some years ago we started what is now known as the Maine Author Collection. It includes several hundred inscribed presentation volumes written by Maine people. The collection steadily increases in interest and worth, forming a valuable contribution to the history and literature students of coming generations. The authors have been most kind and generous in sending inscribed books for the collection, and seem to take as great a pride in being represented here as we do in claiming them as Maine writers.

We hope it will be possible for us to include a copy of AMERICA SINGING in the collection. We assure you that any biographical information you might be willing to send, and a copy of your anthology would be eagerly welcomed.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm

SECRETARY

LORING EUGENE WILLIAMS

Editor
AMERICA SINGING
and
AMERICAN WEAVE

Corresponding Secretary
THE OHIO POETRY SOCIETY
Chairman
THE WRITERS' LEAGUE

1665 East Seventy-third Street

Cleveland, Ohio

March 17, 1937.

Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine.

Gentlemen - Attention Hilda McLeod

Thank you for your letter of the 15th, in regard to my yearly anthologies. Perhaps you are under the impression that these are books of my own work. They are not; nor do they pretend to represent the biggest names in poetry, but are, rather for the purpose of encouraging lesser known poets and bringing their work to the attention of the reading public.

I am very glad to send copies of the 1935 and 1936 editions of the book, together with a small (but I hope timely) brochure of my own poems which were written during the war.

I am a native of Maine, and in another year or so hope to have a summer home somewhere within the borders of that state. I was born in South Berwick but my father moved to Sanford in the early 1900's to manage The Sanford Co-operative Association, a grocery which flourished for many years under his guidance. I attended school at Kent's Hill and, after graduation, came to Ohio where I have since made my home. My forebears were the early settlers of Kittery and Elliot, and Hon. Jistine Shaw of Kittery who has done quite a good deal of historical writing on York County, is my uncle.

Sincerely yours,

L. E. Williams

March 25, 1937

Mr. Loring Eugene Williams
1665 East 73rd Street
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mr. Williams:

We have received the 1935 and 1936 editions of AMERICA SINGING, and also your poem "In Sarah Orne Jewett's Garden," and "Twenty Years Ago" all of which we are delighted to add to the Maine Author Collection.

We hope that your summer home in Maine will materialize, and that when it does, you will give us the pleasure of a call from you.

Meanwhile, please accept our very sincere thanks for your interest and kindness in presenting the Maine Author Collection with this material, and also for the biographical information which you sent.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm

SECRETARY

August 4, 1937

Mr. Loring Eugene Williams
1665 East 73rd Street
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mr. Williams:

How kind you are to remember the Maine Author Collection! We have just received the charming brochure, THE ERIE TRAIL, which has been read with pleasure. Naturally, the one most interesting to us is VAGABONDS, your deftly written poem, a truly lovely and unusual portrait.

Thank you very much for sending us THE ERIE TRAIL.

We are anticipating with eagerness the volume, POETS OF MAINE. For some time such a book has been needed, and we congratulate you and wish you success in the venture.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
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August 11, 1937

Mr. Loring Eugene Williams
1665 East 73rd Street
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mr. Williams:

We have received the copy of TWENTY YEARS AGO, which you sent to us. We are delighted to have another copy of this most interesting collection of poems, and thank you for the gift.

We hope the brochure of Maine poems is assuming large and gratifying proportions, and that we may look forward to its publication soon.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm

SECRETARY

Maine Man's Poetry Publication Considered Outstanding Magazine

By DORIS RICKER MARSTON

7 31/1948
"As far back as I can remember I had a special feeling for poetry," said Loring Williams, a director of the Maine Writers' Conference at Ocean Park.

He grinned as he recalled himself as a small boy in a Sanford grocery store sorting potatoes. "While I worked, I recited all the poems I knew, emphasizing the tempo with falling potatoes as a drummer marks the beat of a martial air. I knew lots of poems because I liked to learn them."

"Paul Revere's Ride" was a special favorite of that little boy. Many years later when an older Loring Williams stood at Portland Head Light near a great whitewashed rock and learned that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow had sat there as he wrote, he felt very close to the Maine poet.

He had gone a long way since the time he had recited the poetry of others, for now he wrote singing words of his own. It has not been an easy life for a man with poetry in his heart, for his parents—along with many other hard-headed Yankees—had considered the reading and writing of poetry impractical pastimes. While he had lightened what he as a boy regarded as drudgery by reciting aloud the poetry of the masters, he was careful to hide the poems he wrote himself from his family.

Fine Punishment

It was incomprehensible to his family that he could enjoy learning poetry for the joy of saying it. He remembers the time he had misbehaved in school and the teacher as punishment ordered him to learn "Still sits the schoolhouse by the road, A ragged beggar sunning . . ." She must have been surprised when in 15 minutes he came to her desk and said all of John Greenleaf Whittier's poem. She would have been chagrined as well if she had known that he had previously memorized the lines for pleasure.

Editor Now

Loring Williams, now editor of "American Weave," (one of the better poetry magazines) and a resident of Cleveland, Ohio, was born in South Berwick, the son of Lionel H. Williams. His family soon moved

to Sanford, where his father organized the Sanford Cooperative Association. It was here that he helped in the Washington Street grocery store. He was graduated from Kent's Hill Academy and then went to Akron, Ohio, where his aunt, Miss Mary Alice Rines, taught at Buchtel College (now Akron University). The president of the college was Dr. A. B. Church, who had been minister of the Universalist Church in South Berwick.

Served in World War I

While he was overseas fighting in World War I, the Maine boy began to write poetry in earnest. He hid his efforts carefully from others, dreading the inevitable "kidding". Several of his poems were published anonymously in "Stars and Stripes."

Settled In Cleveland

Because he liked the Lake Erie country, he returned there when he was released from service and settled in Cleveland. He had been writing verse seriously for some time when in 1926 he sent several poems to the Home Magazine, Nashville, Tenn. This publication did not pay for the poetry it published but gave a subscription for each poem used. Mr. Williams was dismayed to find, when his first acceptance appeared, that it was in very inferior company. Posthaste, he sent word to the editor not to publish the other two

poems which had been accepted and telling him why.

"Can you do any better in selecting what goes in the magazine?" was the editor's reply. Mr. Williams said he could and he became the poetry editor. This developed into fresh contacts with the better poets, among them Edwin Markham and Gamaliel Bradford.

From 1928 to 1934 he published "Embryo," a magazine of verse, taking with him to the new venture a good following from the Home Magazine. A yearly anthology of the best verse, called "America Singing," was begun in 1930 and continued to 1939.

Meanwhile, those poets who considered themselves beyond the embryonic or beginning stage objected to the title of the magazine of verse, and the depression of the early 1930's was the final straw which broke the back of the enterprise.

Does Own Printing

Mr. Williams bought a small printing press on which to do personal work. Then he bought a larger one. Friends began to ask him to do printing for them and his hobby grew wings, finally developing into "American Weave." Like two pocket-sized books previously issued, "Cleveland Poets" and "Buckeye Leaves," this also began as a small magazine, but was later increased in size.

Not only a poet but a craftsman, Maine's transplanted citizen edits, prints and binds the entire edition of the quarterly magazine. At first verse was not paid for, but for the past two years "American Weave" has been paying regular rates. Strangely, Mr. Williams has found that paying for poetry has increased the subscription list.

Encourage New Writers

Remembering his own struggles as a young poet, Mr. Williams gives concrete encouragement to new writers by offering several awards each year. Among them is a prize to an American Weave subscriber whose work has most often appeared in print the previous year. This entitles the winner to have a collection

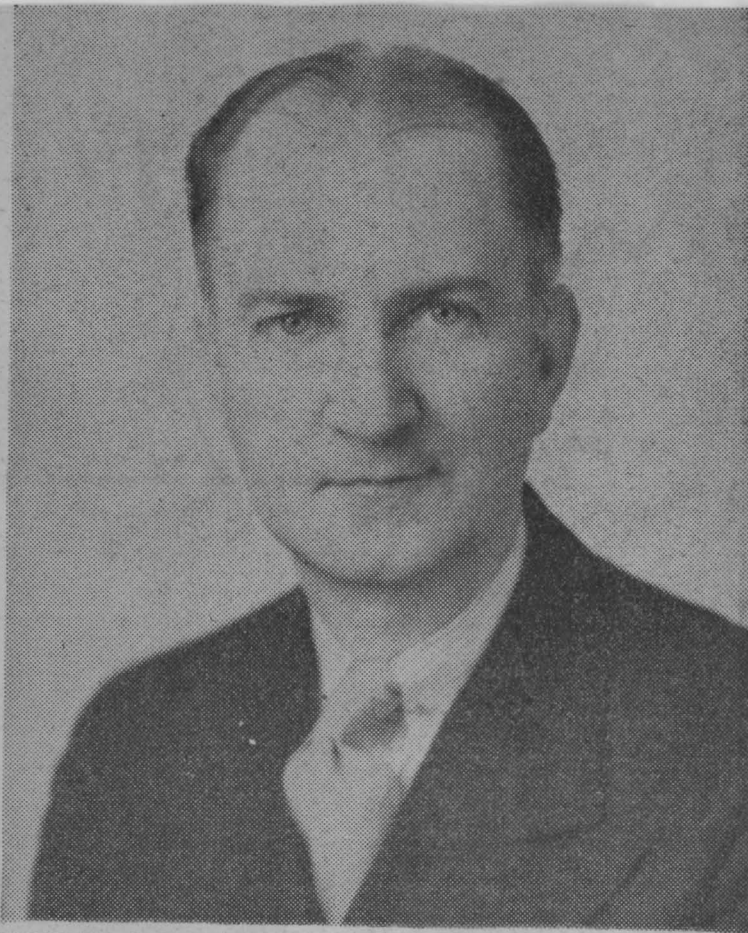
of his poems published on a royalty basis, which means that the poet receives all the sales receipts above the cost of publication. Sometimes one of the best poems of the year is set to music by Mrs. Williams, who is a talented musician and composer.

Gives Awards

In cooperation with William Harris of Cambridge, Mass., editor of Rewrite Magazine, and himself a native of South Berwick, Mr. Williams gives a similar annual award at the University of New Hampshire Writer's Conference, called "The Durham Chap Book."

He gives several awards each year at the Maine writer's Conference, which was organized at the suggestion of Mr. Williams. With the assistance of Adelbert Jakeman and Mrs. Jessie Wheeler Freeman, it has increased in popularity and importance until now it is considered a definite part of the Ocean Park Summer program, and attracts writers from all over the state of Maine and from many other states.

Nearly ten years ago, disturbed by the fact that he could foresee World War II's clouds on the horizon, Mr.



BORN IN SOUTH BERWICK—Loring Williams, publisher of the poetry magazine, "American Weave," spent his early life in Maine, but settled in Cleveland following his return from the first World War. His magazine encourages new writers, serves to introduce many to the public. Yearly Mr. and Mrs. Williams, a noted composer, return to Maine during the Summer. While here Mr. Williams serves as director of the Maine Writers' Conference at Ocean Park.

Williams put together the poems he had written on the battle fields of France and published a little book, "Twenty Years Ago." He has also published "In Passing," "Dusk Flowers," and "With Careful Eye." The latter was published this year and titled for a phrase in the poem, "The Weather Vane", by Robert P. Tristram Coffin.

Visits Maine Yearly

Each year the Cleveland man returns to his native New England, attending the Maine and New Hampshire conferences, and visiting relatives. A sister, Mrs. Charles Pinder, lives in South Berwick. His father's uncle, Capt. Willie Williams, was a keeper at Boone Island Light until a few years ago.

Through all the years since he was a little boy tossing potatoes from one basket to another to the sound of rhythmical rhyme, Mr. Williams has done all he could to foster the spirit of poetry, both in himself and in others. He is a past president and present radio chairman of the Ohio Poetry Society. Both his wife and he are past presidents of the Composers and Authors Association of America. He is chairman of a group which meets monthly at the Cleveland Public Library to study poetry and criticize each other's verse.

His annual awards at the conferences made in person, Mr. Williams has returned to Cleveland, and tucked away in his bag was a packet of poems written by young poets, soon to be published for all to enjoy in "American Weave."

August 23, 1946

Mr. Loring Eugene Williams
1665 East 73rd Street
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mr. Williams:

Several years ago you generously presented to the Maine Author Collection some of your work. The exhibit is, we boast, the only place where all the work of all Maine authors is gathered and permanently preserved. This boast now has a flaw, we perceive, since your new book, WITH CAREFUL EYE, is not here.

May we say, is not here "yet?" We hope that you will want to inscribe and present a copy for inclusion in the collection. It would give us pleasure to have all your work here, and we shall therefore trust that WITH CAREFUL EYE may be added to your earlier poetry.

You have our continuing good wishes for your creative and editorial labors. Has the summer home in Maine materialized?

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

hmj

August 17, 1949

Mr. Loring Eugene Williams
1665 East 73rd Street
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mr. Williams:

Congratulations upon the publication of the collection of Sarah Orne Jewett's verses. We hope that the Maine Author Collection, to which you have been previously kindly disposed, may anticipate an inscribed copy.

Quite apart from this exhibit collection, we shall want to buy a copy for lending purposes, so we would be glad to know the price, so that we may place it on our order list.

We hope that these verses may be warmly received and prized by those who appreciate Miss Jewett's work.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

November 15, 1949

Mr. Loring Eugene Williams
American Weave Magazine
1550 East 115th Street
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Mr. Williams:

Thank you for the booklet of Sarah Orne Jewett's verses, which we are placing in the Maine Author Collection with her other writing. We are very pleased to be able to add this book, and appreciate your courtesy in making it possible.

We hope that some day this collection may include your writing, also. Although we claim proudly that it includes all the work of all Maine authors, we know that there are still a few omissions, and we constantly hope that they may be corrected. It would give us satisfaction and much pleasure to be privileged to add your books of poetry to these shelves.

Please accept our thanks for your recent gift to the collection, and our cordial invitation to call at the library when you are again in Maine.

Very truly yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

We enclose our order for a copy of the verses, to be placed in our lending section.

November 29, 1949

Mr. Loring Eugene Williams
The American Weave Press
1559 East 115th Street
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Mr. Williams:

The other copy of VERSES BY SARAH ORNE JEWETT has come, and also the complimentary copy of WITH CAREFUL EYE, which we are particularly pleased to be able to add to the Maine Author Collection. Thank you very much for making it possible. We hope that your poems may all be gathered into a book some day. Poetry is perhaps the least rewarding of literary skills, in a monetary sense; but it gives a great deal of enjoyment to those who appreciate it.

Thank you for your kindness and interest.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

hmj

October 9, 1969

Mr. Loring E. Williams
220 Portland Street
South Berwick, Maine 03908

Dear Mr. Williams:

For some deplorable reason (or no discernible reason at all), the Maine Author Collection has nothing later than the 1946 WITH CAREFUL EYE in your section. This unhappy state has just been made evident to us when the purchased copy of BROTHER CROW arrived.

Your felicitious skill does not abate with the years, and it would be difficult to select a favorite among these most recent poems.

We hope that the intervening books may join your earlier ones in the Maine Author Collection, and we especially hope that an inscribed copy of BROTHER CROW will be among them.

Our best wishes for a happy continuation of your work.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

October 17, 1969

Mr. Loring Williams
220 Portland Street
South Berwick, Maine 03908

Dear Mr. Williams:

You are indeed kind to send FIFTY YEARS AGO and SELECTED POEMS for the Maine Author Collection. You say that you are surprised in that we have WITH CAREFUL EYE. Perhaps, however, you will remember that when you were in Cleveland you sent us inscribed copies of your books. We hope that some day we may have BROTHER CROW to include with your other books.

Your "retirement" years seem to be full of accomplishment, and we congratulate you -- and ourselves, for having you here.

Please accept our warm thanks.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

**The Hart Crane and Alice Crane
Williams Memorial Fund**
LORING WILLIAMS, ADMINISTRATOR
SOUTH BERWICK, MAINE 03908

October 11, 1969

Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine

Dear Miss Jacob:

Thank you for your note. All of my collections previous to the Selected Poems '63 are out of print. I am surprised that you have a copy of the 1946 With Careful Eye.

I am mailing, with my compliments, copies of the only collections of my work (other than Brother Crow) which are still available.

Cordially,

Loring Williams

February 24, 1970

Mr. Loring E. Williams
220 Portland Street
South Berwick, Maine 03908

Dear Mr. Williams:

It is too bad that we have to admit that the Maine Author Collection lacks your BROTHER CROW. This book is in the general section of the library, but evidently we did not write to you about a copy for the Maine exhibit.

We do hope that you will want to inscribe and present a copy for this purpose. We think the representation of your work is complete save for this book.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

March 4, 1970

W. Paul Quarrington, Attorney
Estate of Loring E. Williams
North Berwick, Maine 03906

Dear Mr. Quarrington:

Thank your for letting us know of
Mr. Williams' death. We evidently failed to
notice this fact in the newspaper.

If it is possible for the Maine Author
Collection to have BROTHER CROW, we shall be
most appreciative, and at any rate we appreciate
your willingness to keep us in mind.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

W. PAUL QUARRINGTON

COUNSELOR AND ATTORNEY AT LAW

NORTH BERWICK, MAINE 03906

AREA CODE 207 676-2241

March 2, 1970

Mrs. F. W. Jacob
Maine State Library
Augusta, Maine 04330

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

Your letter of February 24, 1970, addressed to Mr. Loring E. Williams of South Berwick, Maine, has been referred to this office for answering. Mr. Williams passed away on January 14, 1970.

It may be that we can find an inscribed copy of his book "Brother Crow" amongst his other books. If so, we shall be glad to forward it to you for the collection of Maine authors in the Maine State Library.

Very truly yours,



W. Paul Quarrington, Attorney
Estate of Loring E. Williams

WPQ:acs

March 10, 1970

Mr. Elmer Rogers
RFD
Berwick, Maine 03901

Dear Mr. Rogers:

Thank you very much for the copy of
Loring Williams' BROTHER CROW which arrived
this morning. We are indeed grateful for your
interest, and glad that Mr. Williams' section
of the Maine exhibit will now be complete.

Sincerely yours

djc

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

March 10, 1970

W. Paul Quarrington, Attorney
Estate of Loring E. Williams
North Berwick, Maine 03906

Dear Mr. Quarrington:

Mr. Elmer Rogers has sent a copy of
BROTHER CROW for the Maine Author Collection,
and we have written to him to express our
thanks for his interest.

Our appreciation is also due you for
making possible the inclusion of this book
in Mr. Williams' section of the exhibit.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection