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The Works of Margaret Deland

James Humphry, III
Does any reader of the Colby Library Quarterly know why the Reverend Jacob Abbott once declined an invitation to Buffalo, or has any reader of these pages knowledge of any letter of Abbott containing any reference to Buffalo? If so, the present writer will be grateful for the information.

In 1836 Jacob Abbott was elected Professor of English Literature by the brand-new University of Western New York. It was well for him, however, that he did not accept, for the institution folded up in the winter of 1837. The financial panic of that year hit Buffalo even harder than most other places and swept away what endowment had been collected for the "university," which was housed in a drab old three-story building still standing.

When the University of Buffalo was founded in 1846, it was not on the pattern of the short-lived University of Western New York and there is no connection between them.

The Works of Margaret Deland

by James Humphry, III

The international reputation of Margaret Deland as an author renders it unnecessary to introduce her to the present generation." This quotation from the Encyclopedia of American Biography of 1936 is typical of the comments on Mrs. Deland's numerous writings. Recently, the Colby College Library was presented a virtually complete collection of the works of Mrs. Deland by her good friend

* Dean Park is the author of a history of the University of Western New York.
and ardent admirer, Mr. N. N. Wallack of Washington, D. C. Almost all of the books are first editions—presentation copies, signed or inscribed by the author. A complete list of the books is included in this article and serves as a bibliography of the published writings of Mrs. Deland, many of which have not been listed elsewhere as coming from her pen. No attempt has been made to include all of her contributions to magazines, or reviews of her works; these are readily available through the usual magazine indexes.

A brief sketch of Mrs. Deland's early life may help the reader to understand why she wrote as she did. Margaretta Wade (Campbell) Deland, her less well-known name, was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on February 23, 1857. Her mother died when Margaret was an infant, and since her father died three years later, she was brought up in the family of her uncle, Mr. B. B. Campbell, during the hectic years of the Civil War. Her reading was restricted to what her aunt thought was proper for a girl in her early teens. "There was a good library in the house," writes Mark A. De Wolfe Howe in the Outlook, November 24, 1906, "and to the child was given the freedom of it all, with the sole reservation that books of fiction were not to be read without permission in each case. The fruits of all this careful nurture, and of the vividly remembered child nature upon which it was expended, are clearly to be seen in the delightful pages of The Story of a Child, and in the sympathetic studies of such figures as David in The Awakening of Helena Richie and poor little Theophilus in Justice and the Judge." "Maggie," being a more or less obedient child, read Scott, Hawthorne, Shakespeare, etc., and especially the Bible. At an early age she began to write, and because she was discouraged from submitting her work for publication (although Mrs. Deland later considered it a wise restraint) she decided at the age of sixteen to leave home and exploit her literary bent. The results made a place for her in the annals of American literature.
She attended, among others, the Cooper Union School of Art, and later taught design in the Normal College in New York City. Margaret Campbell's first book, *The Old Garden and Other Verses*, was published in 1886. It is a charming little book, notable not only for its content, but also for its interesting illustrations and format. It has been said that the first edition, which was covered with flowered cloth, was the first of its kind to be used in American book-binding. A later edition of this same work, published in 1892 by Houghton Mifflin, was distinguished by having the text printed on one side of decorated double leaves folded once in Japanese style. Miss Campbell's art training was obviously manifested in this first book, and it might be added that her fondness for gardening was undoubtedly a contributing factor in its preparation.

In 1880 Miss Campbell gave up her teaching position to marry Lorin Fuller Deland, a member of an old New England family. Mr. Deland, commonly referred to as a man of affairs, had inherited his father's publishing business in Boston, but sold it in 1886 to enter the advertising business, which proved to be quite successful. This combination of factors put Mr. Deland in a favorable position to help his wife market her writings. Several of her better known novels were published during these years. Mrs. Deland, in her own way, ranked high with the editors of several of the better known magazines, including *The Atlantic Monthly* and the *Woman's Home Companion*, the media by which *Florida Days*, *Old Chester Tales*, *The Awakening of Helena Richie* and *The Iron Woman*, to mention just a few, were presented to the reading public. In *Harper's Weekly*, August 4, 1906, James McArthur, in his review of *The Awakening of Helena Richie*, made this significant comment: "There are few writers today who could be trusted to handle this theme; I know of no other who possesses the essential graces of spiritual insight, moral sanity, and inherent humor equal to the task."

The fact that Mrs. Deland was a member of both the
Boston Society for Psychic Research and the English Society for Psychical Research is evidenced in her novels that followed *The Old Garden and Other Verses*. *John Ward, Preacher*, the book that made Mrs. Deland famous, came in 1888, and caused considerable comment and controversy in both the United States and England. This title as well as those that followed—*Captain Archer's Daughter, The Kays, Dr. Lavendar's People, Small Things*—“placed her books among those which ‘must be read,’ and introduced the author as a personal force in American thought and progress.” A reviewer in the *Atlantic Monthly* for November, 1893, commenting on *Mr. Tommy Dove, and Other Stories*, said that “her novels show that her interest is in ethical and spiritual problems and they read as if the problems presented themselves to her in abstract form, and that then she set about the solution through imaginary cases. . . . The reader must have been struck with the mellowness of those parts of her novels in which she is unincumbered by great spiritual problems, but evidently exceedingly interested in her persons.” “Her persons” were taken largely from the friends she knew in Old Chester, Pennsylvania, where she lived as a girl.

In 1889 the Delands established a summer residence on the bank of the Kennebunk River near the town of Kennebunkport. Here, away from city life, they found peace and quiet in “comfortable surroundings with an outlook on nature, that should at once be picturesque and in touch with the inspiring things of life; and second, a garden. The first lends inspiration and gives the appropriate ‘atmosphere’ to literary work; the other serves to indulge a natural passion for flowers.” *Mrs. Deland's greatest joy, aside from her writing, was the cultivating of white flowers of all varieties. Her fondness for Maine and the fact that she wrote extensively at her summer home make it quite appropriate that her works should be finally assembled in* 

a library in this State. After her husband's death in 1917 Mrs. Deland maintained her summer residence in Maine until her own death in 1935.

Margaret Deland's stories "are full of charm, humanity and ripe wisdom," writes Ellen Glasgow. "I have read them all again, after many years, with the old sympathy and admiration." A bibliography of all her works is appended to this article so that all readers may, like Miss Glasgow, get acquainted with the writings of this author whose "distinguished intelligence" bring to her novels "a fine human sympathy and understanding." All of the material listed is in the Colby College Library, where it will find company with the notable Thomas Hardy collection. Since the Delands explored the Wessex country with the aid of a map drawn by Hardy himself, it seems quite fitting that the books of both authors should, by two quite different channels, come to stand near each other in the Colby College Library.


*The awakening of Helena Richie*, New York, Burt [c.1906].


*Confession*, Hampton Institute Press, n.d.


*Dr. Lavendar's people*, illustrated by Lucius Hitchcock, New York, Grosset & Dunlap [c.1903].


Florida days, illustrated by Louis K. Harlow, Boston, Little, Brown, c.1889.

Florida days, London, Longmans, 1889.

Foreword to The vanished friend; Evidence, theoretical and practical, of the survival of human identity after death, from the French of Jules Thiebault, New York, Dutton [c.1920].


If this be I, as I suppose it be, illustrated by Dorothy Bayley, New York and London, Appleton-Century, 1935.


The Kays, London, Cape [1926].


Mr. Tommy Dove, and other stories, Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, 1893.

Mr. Tommy Dove, and other stories, London, Longmans, 1893.


Old Chester Tales, with illustrations by Howard Pyle, New York, Harper [1898].

The old garden, and other verses, Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, 1886.

The old garden, and other verses, decorated by Walter Crane, Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, 1892.

The old garden, and other verses, decorated by Walter Crane, Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, 1894.

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*Philip and his wife*, Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, 1894.

*Philip and his wife*, London, Longmans, 1894.


*The rising tide*, Paris, Conard, 1917.

*Sidney*, Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, 1890.

*Sidney*, London, Longmans, 1890.

*Small things*, New York, Appleton, 1919.

*The story of a child*, Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, 1892.

*The story of Delia*, written for the House of Mercy, [1919?].

*A summer day*, illustrations by Louis K. Harlow, Boston, Prang [1889].


*Though inland far we be*, Hampton Institute Press, 1932.


*The wisdom of fools*, Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, 1897.

*The wisdom of fools*, London, Longmans, 1897.