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impression of loss: the society of farmers and hunters in Fraternity is a shrinking one, and we seem to gaze at it from an increasing distance. The recurring descriptions of the landscape, however, tend to reassure us that our loss is not final: the blue hills, the woods, the meadows, and the streams remain; nature waits only to give instruction and to be cultivated like the "thrifty stock" of Mr. Moore. Williams the pastoral moralist is not convinced that we must follow the lead of the Pattens; the way of Nikky Karonen is also open.

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BEN AMES WILLIAMS IN BOOKS

By Richard Cary

For sheer industry and productivity Ben Ames Williams ranks among the most proficient writers of our time in America. During his four decades of active authorship he turned out forty books, which ran into at least seventy-seven subsidiary and English editions, as well as twenty-six foreign translations; he edited three volumes; he contributed introductions, forewords, or chapters to fourteen books by other authors (including a play based upon one of his short stories); and his stories and articles have been incorporated into more than fifty anthologies. His appearances in periodicals number in excess of four hundred.

The immediate reaction to such quantity is to suspect its quality, but one finds no substantiation in Williams' record. A dedicated and meticulous man, Williams served a rugged apprenticeship in his vocation. Satisfied at the outset merely to entertain, he steadily and earnestly raised his sights to loftier concepts of the function of literature. His earlier novels of action and mystification gave way to purposeful studies of character and mores—Splendor, The Strange Woman, House Divided, Owen Glen; his multiple adventurous fictions in the "pulp" magazines are later balanced by the almost plotless
"Fraternity" regional sketches in the Saturday Evening Post, and in such sober havens as the American, Harper's, Century.

The most striking testimonial to Williams' intrinsic worth, and to his versatility besides, is his universal acceptance by editors of starkly disparate anthologies. Whatever topic Williams chose to write about, one of his short stories was inevitably singled out as among the finest in that category. His titles are prominent in collections of Best stories about holidays, dogs, religion, sports, doctors, war, detectives, college life; in stories for children, for men only, for analysis by aspirant authors and by students of literature; in the devilishly difficult short-short story genre. He was awarded laurels by both of the outstanding annual judges of prize American short stories—the O'Brien and the O'Henry Memorial. He was even cited for having produced one of the best rejected stories of the year.

The following list is as complete an approximation of Williams' presence in books as could be gathered from widely scattered and often inadequate sources. Almost every item was verified by the compiler; those few lacking a bibliographic point were unavailable at every locus of inquiry. The known first edition of each book by each different publisher is noted, but no subsequent re-issues by the same firm.

BOOKS BY RAW

All the Brothers Were Valiant. New York: Macmillan Co., 1919.


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(The typescript of a play in three acts dramatized from this novel by Seargent S. Prentice and entitled Hate is in the theatre collection at the New York Public Library.)


(The typescript of a play in three acts dramatized from this novel by Frank E. Carstarphen and with the original title is in the theatre collection at the New York Public Library.)


2. Toronto: Thomas Allen, 1940.

5. Toronto: Thomas Allen, 1941.
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Deep Waters. Chicago: Western Newspaper Union, 1942.


17. Barcelona: Jose Janes, 1958—trans. by Mary Rowe as Que el cielo la juzgue and included with Los inconquistados in Obras de Ben Ames Williams.
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  4.  Zurich: Diana Verlag, 1948—translated by Annemarie Schnieper as Im Schatten Lincolns.


  3.  Barcelona: Jose Janes, 1958—translated by Manuel de la Escalera as Los inconquistados and included with Que el cielo la juzgue in Obras de Ben Ames Williams.

BOOKS EDITED BY BAW


CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS


Thompson's Luck by Harry Greenwood Grover (Cincinnati: Stewart Kidd Co., 1922). Modern Plays No. 19. ["The author acknowledges his indebtedness for the central idea of this play to Ben Ames Williams, whose story, 'They Grind Exceeding Small,' suggested the play."


"Books We Like," in Edward Weeks, Books We Like (Boston: Massachusetts Library Association, 1936), 247-250.


Foreword to John M. Richardson, Steamboat Lore of the Penobscot (Augusta, Me.: Kennebec Journal, 1943), n.p.


Introduction to Sargent F. Collier & Tom Horgan, Mount Desert (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1952), ii.

BAW IN ANTHOLOGIES


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WHEN the stout and florid Editor first saw the Tyro and his wife, he grinned genially, extended his hand, and said, “I’m Bob Davis.” Years later he roared with laughter as he recalled the scene. “I found myself facing the youngest, the most frightened pair of kids I had ever seen, and, so help me, they were holding hands!” His impression of the eager, uncertain, emergent author, “weighing 280 on the hoof and broad as a roll-top desk,” was one he never let Ben Ames Williams forget.

Born twenty years and a thousand miles apart (Robert Hobart Davis on March 23, 1869, in Brownville, Nebraska; Ben

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1 Florence Talpey Williams, All About Da (Portland, Me., privately published, 1962), 72. This is Mrs. Williams’ informal biography of her husband, “written for my grandchildren.”