

Daugherty

Westport, Conn.

Dear Elizabeth Rider Montgomery,

I am naturally very encouraged to know that you contemplate listing Andy in your new book about books, and the story of thier making.

I have often wondered why the hell writers and artist^sever go thru the enormous pain, effort sweat and tears it takes to write a story or for that matter ^{simple} a significant English sentence, paint a picture, or construct a poem, and then encourage the myth that they dash these things off in casual moods of airy inspiration.

Perhaps you will throw some light on this mystery.

I am somewhat at a disadvantage in the face of your questionnaire, As much of the data regarding time and place has escaped me and the particular story or picture book of Andy was never written at all. *in the usual sense.*

I can however give you a more intimate genesis ^{is origin} of that ^{or} your [^] [^] formidable questionnaire might reveal.

I have always strongly felt that laughter was one of the great healing agents for the burdens of humanity. It lightens them at least.

And ^{been} I have always cherished a secret ambition to be able in some way to this contagion of healing laughter. Another interest ^{or} theory I have contemplated is the telling of a story entirely in pictures without the use of words. In this ^{country} only Lynn Ward has done it in his fine novels in wood cut. Of course the comic ^{strip} does this in a way but relies heavily on ballon captions and a complication of plot rather than the simple but unlimited possibilities of pure picturising.

At this point here is how Andy evovled.

Mrs. Daugherty who has written several excellent juveniles, plays and novels, and myself were spending a long winter evening in our

frontier cabin in the Connecticut backwoods about fifty miles from New York. We were having some fine talk about the good plays we had seen and of course discussing the charms of Bernard Shaw's play *André* and the Lion. ^W We had seen it performed in New York Years ago.

As you may recall it was the Lion that stole the show and had all New York rolling in the isles as they say for a whole season.

It was in this mellow mood that I ^{went} ~~went~~ into my studio before turning in and quickly sketched in pencil the picture sequence of Andy and the Lion. I naturally and unconsciously visualised the story in terms of my own middle western childhood. The problem that interested me was to tell a story ^{communicating} ~~with~~ humor, good will and affection entirely ~~thru~~ ^{vms} thru the medium of pictures without words.

The sketches lay in my studio for weeks among the wilderness of a thousand and one drawings paintings and paraphernalia that litter this untidy shop.

When supplies run low it is my practice to go into the settlements to trade and barter and stock up for the next stretch. Putting the sketches in the pocket of my store clothes I adventured to the great city with considerable misgiving and distrust. Greatly confused in the rushing stream of its energetic inhabitants, I happily remembered May Masee, as a person with a sense of humor and as a creative editor with the rare gift of extracting the best from the, ^{and imagination} young writers and artists ^{for} ~~for~~ childrens books, ^{previously} ~~for whom~~ I had illustrated Benets John Browns Body and other books ^{for her.}

Miss Masee was vastly amused with the sketches and said you must make this into a book at once. ^{This} ~~It~~ is an answer to prayer, ~~But~~ You ~~may~~ may be sure I said Amen.

The finished drawings were made in brush and ink and a separate set of drawings for the yellow plate which enriches and gives depth to the printed impression.

Up to to this point there were to be no words accompanying the pictures but when the proofs came in the editors decided that people were unaccustomed to reading pictures without text and that there must be words. As I had ^ever written anything except personal correspondence I passed this up. The editors ~~and my wife~~ drafted a * text but this didn't work. ^{Just seen to out} Finally as a last resort Miss "assee and I sat in her office and wrote on the back of each sketch a line that sounded right. It ~~was~~ took about half an hour and was great fun and the whole fitted together perfectly.

As a happy finale the famous Spenser collection of rare manuscripts ^{at the New York Public library} bought the original drawings to add to their collection of representative American a in this field.

Oddly enough this account seems to be the exception that proves the rule about books and pictures being fashioned thro^u blood tears and sweat. Or maybe my theory is all wrong anyway.

In the ["]Haycraft Authors and illustrators of childrens books is an autobiography which gives you the answers to most of your questionnaire. And if you still want more with some photographs I think I can dig up something in the files. I side with those artists and writers who are finding in the heart and meaning of American life and its people their theme and inspiration. The surface here has only been scratched, the possibilities for rich expression are unlimited.

If I have failed to supply what you want on this theme of Andy I have anyway made the above effort to be cooperative.

with best wishes for the new project,

sincerely

James Dougherty