

Letter dated July 20, 1941 from Helen Temple Cooke to Constance (Noyes) Robertson, Class of 1916.

She was an American author of historical novels. She also wrote histories of the Oneida Community, which was founded by her grandfather, John Humphrey Noyes in 1847.

We do not know which of her novels Robertson sent to HTC. She published three before 1941:

Enchanted Avenue (1931), Five Fatal Letters, under the pseudonym Dana Scott (1937), and Seek No Further (1938).

July 20, 1941

My dear Constance,

It would be very difficult for me to explain convincingly why I have been so long delayed in acknowledging your gift of books. The fact is that I read thru both within a week and was more interested in both than I have been in any book for a long time. They offered so much that I wanted to write about in great detail that I put them [to] one side for a free evening when I could be quite alone with you. Dear child, I have been inundated by every sort of problem and care, and this hour is the first period of freedom that I could devote to you. Now we are alone and I may try to let you [know] how much you gave me in the two accounts of [Oneida] Community life. I have rarely been more enthralled. It happens that I have never known any one who could take me into the heart and meaning of such living and this revelation of it all has been a keen pleasure. As you now know I have been extremely interested for many years in the meeting of spheres of influence in [intermediate?] communications, but I have not realized the extent to which the Community leadership depended upon that kind of guidance. Of course I should have known it but my associations and reading have not been "up that alley."

Your father's story is delightful and I feel deeply indebted for the education given me through its pages. I am hoping that sometime, somehow, somewhere I shall be able to meet him and have the opportunity to follow his mind on into the higher reaches of his education and experience. I know he has been distinguished but I don't know just what he has accomplished in mental life in his mature years. I long to partake of the promised wisdom of his faith.

Your own work surprises and delights me. In consideration of your inheritance, upbringing and associations I ought not to be surprised to know you use so successfully your background for a novel, but I was surprised to have the Constance of my remembrance do it so well. Far from being "offended" in any way, as you thought I might be, I am very admiring of your gift. A mind as full as mine is with many demanding, imperative projects is not easily held by a book but there was so much that was new and absorbing in it for me that I didn't leave it till the wee small hours of the morning. I shall hope that we may meet again before very long and that I may enter even more intimately into your mental life of today. Naturally I think of my old girls as they were until I have the opportunity to meet them in their mature life

when all kinds of rich experience has developed their powers. I trust that you are still writing and that you will not forget me.

I have just realized a dream in a new home where I shall hope to welcome you. Several years ago Bliss Carman was spending a weekend with me when he wrote and read to me a poem called "Shamballah." It made a great impression upon me, and I have always looked forward to having a home on the heights somewhere that I might call *Shamballah*. It has recently materialized on the mountain hillside behind Tenacre, which rises to the greatest height in this vicinity, and gives me a panoramic view of the whole country enclosed in soft blue hills. The house is large, roomy and modern, the grounds, garden and orchard extensive, so that I now have everything I need for my personal comfort and happiness. The heavens by night are wonderful! Come to "Shamballah"!

page 2 Letter of HTC to Constance (Noyes) Robertson

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Have you read of the fabled Shamballah  
In symbols or letters of gold  
Whence issued the bringers of knowledge  
For the saving of peoples untold?  
They builded no temples save beauty  
Save truth they established no creed  
Great love was their power and purpose  
As a flower in the heart of a seed.

Pure wine of the spirit they gave us  
A gladness to make us whole  
But we trusted to cunning to save us  
And cunning has cheated our soul.  
The brand of the beast is upon us  
In wantonness, folly, and greed  
We have trampled the truth that should light us  
And our darkness is ours indeed.

The Nations are gathered to counsel  
In jealousy, envy, and fear  
Forgetting the Judgement of Karma  
And the judgement of Karma is here.  
O'er Rome, over London and Paris  
The arrows of destiny wait  
Yet who now seeks word from Shamballah?  
Who knocks at the Ivory Gate?

There are three little verses from a long poem first quoted to you, dear Constance, with love and gratitude.

Helen Temple Cooke