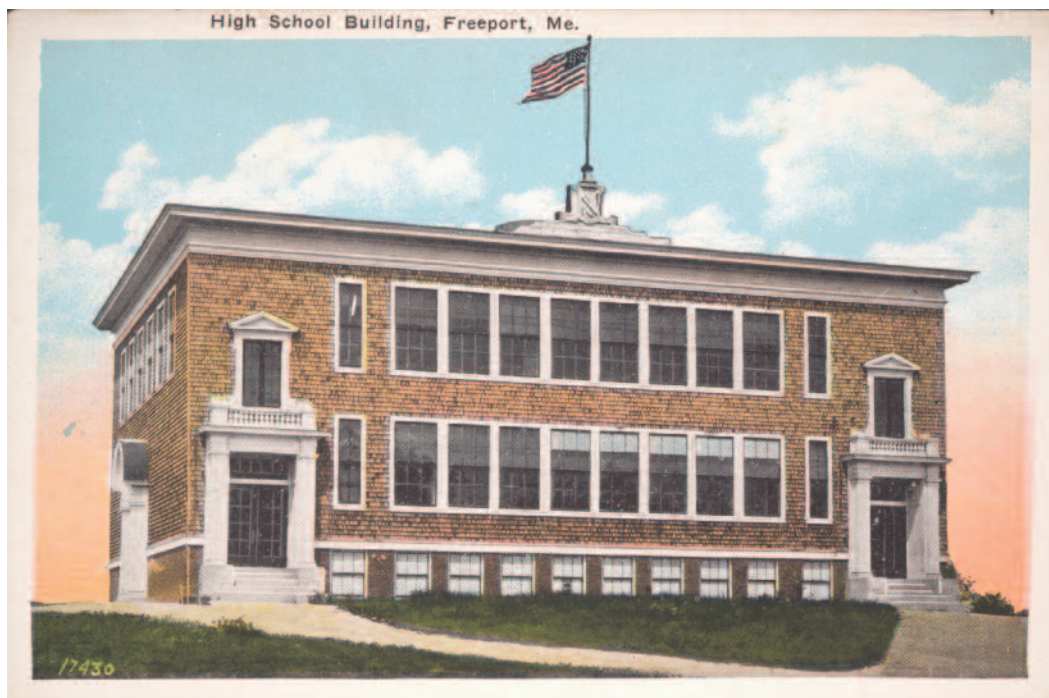
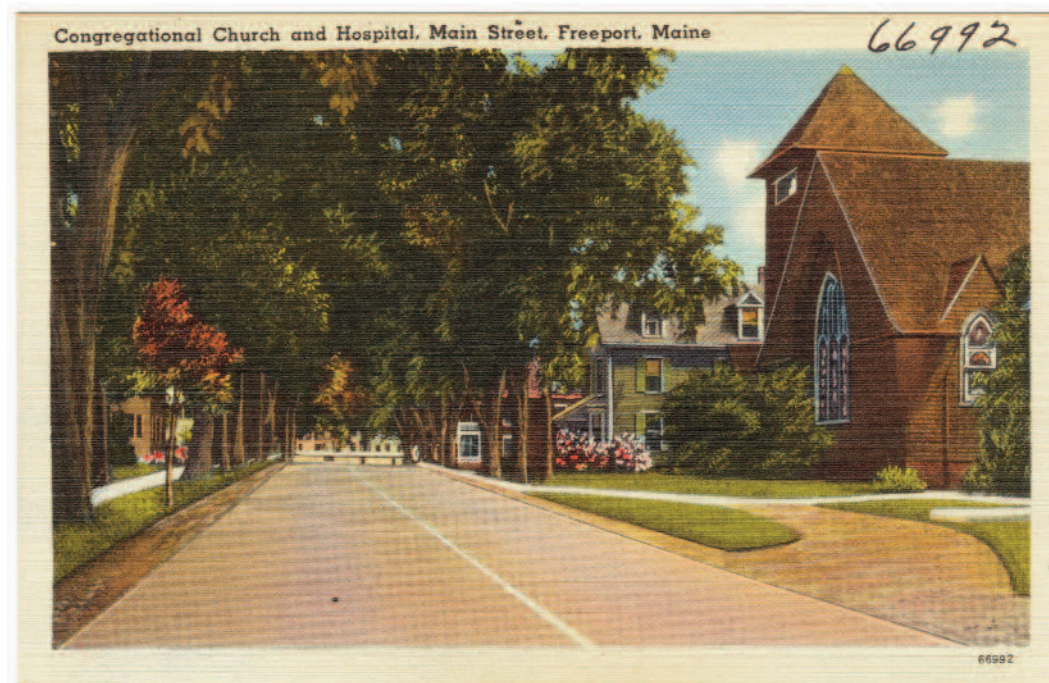




Freeport High School, circa 1925.
Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.net #17439



First Parish Congregational Church, Freeport, circa 1938.
Boston Public Library, MaineMemory.net #66466

IMPROVING THE SILENCE: THE LIFE AND LITERARY CAREER OF JOHN GOULD OF MAINE

David B. Raymond

The most famous Maine humorist of the twentieth century was John Gould, but little is known of this prominent literary comedian and his contribution to Maine literature, folklore, and history. Gould was a weekly contributor to the *Christian Science Monitor* for over 60 years, writing humorous pieces about life in Maine, Maine folktales, and even Maine history. He was the author of thirty books, which have been overlooked by scholars as a rich source of creative non-fiction about life in Maine. This paper provides a brief biography and an analysis of his contribution to our understanding of Maine folklore, history, and humor.

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On August 17, 2002, Governor Angus King of Maine proclaimed the day 'John Gould Day' in recognition of his many contributions to Maine literature. In his proclamation, the Governor called Gould "a chronicler of Maine culture, Maine history, and the Maine vernacular... an autobiographer, storyteller, and novelist with remarkable wit, insight, and perception, whose prose style and technique rank with those of America's best writers." As insightful as the Governor's proclamation was, he overlooked an important aspect of John Gould's life when he omitted any reference to his work as a journalist. Like many of his predecessors, John Gould made his way into the literary world through journalism. He began his writing career as a small-town reporter, served as editor of several community newspapers in Maine, and made his mark on the national market by publishing his work in some of the finest newspapers in the land. He was a weekly feature writer for the *Christian Science Monitor*, a semi-regular contributor to *The Evening Sun* (Baltimore), and occasional author for other major newspapers (*New York Times Sunday Magazine* and the *Boston Sunday Post*) and magazines (such as *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Down East*, *Field and Stream*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Yankee*). His work

in journalism earned him two honorary degrees (Bowdoin College in 1968 and the University of Maine at Farmington in 1976), induction as a charter member of the Maine Press Association Hall of Fame in 1998, and a nomination for a Pulitzer Prize in Journalism in 2001. Finally, his 62-year career as a newspaper columnist is unsurpassed in the annals of American journalism.¹

Despite Gould's prodigious output and accomplishments, he has not received the scholarly attention he deserves. What manner of man was John Gould, and how did he become the longest-running columnist in American journalism history? What kind of books did he write, and why should we read them today? What follows is a brief literary biography of John Gould that attempts to answer those questions and in so doing demonstrate why he was one of Maine's preeminent authors of the Twentieth Century. The paper begins with a brief overview of his early life and the forces that shaped him as a man and author. It then traces his career as a feature writer for both the local and national press as well as his rise and fall as editor of community newspapers. The paper concludes with an analysis of Gould's literary output and the contribution that his works have made to the fields of Maine humor and Maine folklore. His uniquely Maine style of literary humor sets him apart from the old Downeast humor school and merits consideration of Gould as one of the important minor figures in American literary history.

Maine Man in the Making (1908-1931)²

John Thomas Gould was born on October 22, 1908, in Brighton, Massachusetts, the first of four children (Louise, Franklin, Jr., and Katherine) to Franklin and Hilda Gould. His father, born and raised on a small farm in Lisbon, Maine, had a difficult upbringing. Franklin Gould's mother left him and his father Thomas when he was in his teens, taking seven of his eight siblings with her and leaving Franklin behind. For five difficult years, Franklin lived with his father, worked the farm, and prepared meals. It was a hard life with little time to attend school or be a boy. At the age of 15, he left home and worked one menial job after another until he

found employment with the Vanceboro & Boston Railway. Over time, he worked his way up the ranks to the position of railway postal clerk on the Bangor to Boston route. While in Boston, he met and married Hilda Dobson Jenkins, who had come from Prince Edward Island ("The Island" to natives) in search of a husband. John Gould affectionately recalled his mother as "serene, confident, happy, possessive, very much in love and beautiful." He remembers her as a first-rate cook and a loving mother, who filled his belly with good food and his heart with love. She also instilled in him the virtues of Yankee frugality by the careful way that she managed the family's meager resources to provide for the necessities of life. Aside from his parents, the most influential person in Gould's life was his grandfather, Thomas Gould. John Gould spent much time with his grandfather working the farm and sharing in the "fun" of making things grow. His grandfather's tales of service in the Sixteenth Maine Regiment of Volunteers in Civil War captivated Gould, instilling in him an interest in and respect for the past that remained with him for the rest of his days.³

Aside from his family, the small, rural town of Freeport figured prominently in his development. Gould spent the first ten years of his life in Massachusetts, but he wrote that he remembered "nothing of Brighton, but . . . everything after we moved to Freeport in 1918." Gould's unpublished autobiography belies this statement, but it does indicate the importance that he placed on his Maine upbringing. Growing up in the small, rural town of Freeport made Gould into a Mainer. "All I am or ever hope to be," Gould wrote, "I owe to my mother's bringing me up in that small Maine town, because growing to a man there gave me the priceless things that universities don't sell, and other people don't know." The Gould family lived on Maple Avenue, where they kept a garden, an orchard, a cow, and chickens. The family raised what they ate and instilled in John a love of the land and traditional Yankee frugality.⁴

Freeport was a typical Maine town. There were two churches (the staid traditional Congregational and the upstart Baptist), a theater for plays and movies, a bowling alley, a library (one of Gould's favorite haunts when he was young),

and the usual slate of local merchants including a men's clothing store run by L.L. Bean and his brother Otho. One could get to Freeport by horse and buggy on the dirt road that ran through town, by the electric trolley that connected Freeport with adjacent communities, or by the Maine Central Railroad that connected the town to the outside world. In the early 1900s, raising kids was a community effort, and each of these institutions helped shape Gould through his daily interactions with teachers, librarians, businessmen, and tradesmen. Small town life embodied and reinforced the values of hard work, self-reliance, and thrift that his parents tried to impart. As a tribute to their influence, Gould filled his books with stories and characters that hailed from his boyhood days.⁵

Franklin Gould made sure that his son had a "good boyhood partly because he never had one." Since Franklin worked "six and eight" (on the road six out of fourteen days), John assumed the farm chores when his father was away working his railway shift. "At ten," Gould remembered, "I was milking the cow and attending the hens. I hoed alongside him in the gardens. We cut firewood together." There was also plenty of time for pleasurable activities like hunting, fishing, and berrying. From these activities, John Gould learned to negotiate the woods, which was an important part of becoming a man in rural Maine. To survive in the wild, a man needs to know how to fish using a sapling, how to hunt and shoot, how to stay warm and dry in the woods, how to find his way out, and, if that didn't work, how to get found by staying put and banging the "be-jabbers" out of a tree to keep warm and draw attention to one's location. Learning to survive on one's own in the wild was good training for the kind of self-reliant life that one lived on a small farm in rural Maine. "The woods of Maine are a fine thing to have in your background," Gould claimed, "and although our boyhood in them was fun, there were plenty of grim realities that point up our play into great education advantages."⁶

Mastering woodcraft was the pleasurable first step on the road to manhood; doing a day's work with men was the ultimate rite of passage. "You come to be a man, in Maine," Gould wrote, "by what you do and how much you

know—not by who you are." As a youth, Gould would rise early in the morning, do his chores at home, then head off to town to hang around the local livery stable doing odd jobs and running errands. If he was missing for a few days, the men would ask where he had been. "A boy growing up likes to hear things like that. It made us feel good." Gould remembers. "Nobody likes to be counted out and at Harry Dunbar's livery stable they always counted the boys in." Training for manhood came by working with men doing small jobs until you earned the right to do the actual work itself. Eventually, a boy earned the right to work alongside men, but he was paid the lesser rate as a boy. Earning a man's wage was a tangible marker on the road to manhood. For Gould, manhood came one winter following a heavy snowstorm. Before the advent of state roads and snowplows, horses made their way through the snow and packed down a path for travel throughout the winter. If the snowfall was too deep for the horses to tread a trail, men were employed to shovel a path for the horses to walk. One winter, after a particularly brutal Nor'easter, Gould and his father set off to clear the road for the horses to resume their travels. At the end of the day, when Gould received his pay, he was delighted to discover he had been paid a man's wages. "And it is a wonderful day," Gould recalled, "when the growing boy discovers that he is being treated by men as an equal."⁷

Like most rural boys, Gould developed his work ethic by working a variety of summer jobs, some typical for rural youth and others not. Despite his rather small stature, Gould worked at several physically demanding jobs. For two summers, he worked with the local road crew shoveling gravel onto wagons to rebuild town roads. It was "dull, methodical, rhythmical idiot-work" that instilled in him a desire to study hard to avoid a lifetime of such labor. Another summer, he worked as a deliveryman for his uncle's ice business. Delivering ice involved packing large blocks of ice onto a delivery wagon, then carrying the blocks of ice up the stairs into the customer's home, and placing them in a refrigerator. Sometimes Gould had to carry the large blocks of ice up many flights of stairs to deliver ice to a customer in an apartment com-

plex. His Uncle Ralph thought this too much for him, so he set his nephew up to sell raker-tooth bucksaws to the local farmers. Since the majority of Mainers cut wood to heat their homes, an improved saw was a welcome technological advance and easy to sell. Uncle Ralph, who ran a country store in Anson where he was renowned for his sharp trading and equally sharp wit, gave Gould a lesson in the art of Yankee trading and frugality to enhance his profits. Gould was instructed to sell the saws for a dollar plus the farmer's old saw in trade. He would then take the old saw's handle, replace the blade with a raker-tooth blade, and sell it to the next farmer. If the farmer could not pay in cash, Gould was told to be resourceful in taking items on trade. Often, Gould would take a chicken in trade, which he would kill, pluck, and sell to the local storekeeper. Another summer, Gould bought an old 1917 Model T Ford, took out the backseat, installed an ice chest, and traveled the countryside peddling fresh seafood. These various jobs taught Gould the value of hard work, the skill of Yankee trading, and the necessity of frugality, virtues that would stay with him for the remainder of his days.⁸

There are few blemishes on Gould's bucolic childhood, but two that stand out are his experience with religion and education. The church was one of several organizations that good townspeople belonged to in a small community, and his mother, who was "strong on church without being adamant as to persuasion," made sure her family was members. Her piety instilled in him a respect for, if not a devotion to, the local Congregational Church. His father went to church sporadically, Gould remembered, mostly "to please Mother—as we all did." Small town churches struggled to find competent ministers to serve the community, often resorting to men who were in the twilight of their careers or were defective in some moral or temperamental way, making them ineffective preachers and teachers of the word of God. For many years, he worked behind the scenes, pumping the pipe organ, which gave him the freedom to "give the sermon the disinterest it deserved." He scoffed at sin, reveling in his innate goodness and that of his fellow man. To Gould, "the Bible was the rule

and guide of our faith that pious people carried to church," and the lessons from the Congregational Sunday-school sessions" were deemed something to endure. The most moving religious experience he could recall, with his usual understated wit, was when he "was converted from Congregational first baseman to a Baptist left fielder" for the summer baseball league. In short, the Congregational Church had little impact on Gould beyond biblical literacy, and much of that came from his grandfather, who made his grandson read from the Bible when he stayed with him on his farm.⁹

If Gould was condescending and indifferent toward his religious formation, he was uncharacteristically bitter about his education. Small towns often fall victim to licensed but incompetent teachers, and Freeport was no exception. Memories of unqualified, even abusive teachers haunt his otherwise cheery childhood memories. Gould generally felt that teachers were not up to the challenge of teaching bright children. There were "[t]oo few [who] knew how to fire us for learning and seeking. Too many insulted the bright days of youth with perfunctory, routine, colorless horse-dingle—were never equal to reaching and yearning with us." Some were even downright cruel, as was the male teacher who beat Gould mercilessly and without provocation to instill fear and order in the class ("Nothing ever hurt me, body and soul, as he did"). Others had mental problems that hampered their teaching, such as the teacher who was not only removed from the classroom but was also institutionalized before the end of the school term. There might have even been some sexual abuse, although he is vague about this accusation.¹⁰

High school was a different matter. Freeport High School consisted of four teachers and one hundred students. The curriculum was basic—English, math, and science—but included instruction in Latin, which Gould counted as one of the keys to his success as a writer. Gould believed the study of Latin was the best way to master the English language for it helps one to understand grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. He also enjoyed debates, recitations, and demanding literature that was part of the curricu-

lum. Through assignments and the library, Gould encountered authors such as Mark Twain, Bill Nye, Bret Harte, and Guy de Maupassant, who shaped his understanding of humor and his manner of essay writing.¹¹

Following graduation in 1926, Gould attended Bowdoin College or “Boardin College” as his grandfather called it. His father had not completed high school, so he was determined that his children would get the education he lacked. Recognizing the worth of the liberal arts, Franklin Gould demanded that his children “shun the secretarial studies and instead apply [themselves] to the languages, history, and fine arts.” Gould majored in English with an eye on a career in journalism despite his father’s “doubts about the honesty of literary endeavor.” To save money, Gould commuted to college every day by trolley, but the trolley was slow and ran on a limited schedule. As a result, he often could not get to the library to access reserved readings and missed student events and activities on campus. His schedule was so taxing he was not able to keep up with his studies and was dismissed after the first semester. Gould then took a position with the *Boston Post* as a Maine correspondent to earn money to support his studies when he could return to college. After he was readmitted to college the next fall, he studied hard, did reasonably well, and graduated in 1931. He won a prize for excellence in composition, and he spent the \$30 prize money on a typewriter that he used for his work as a journalist.¹²

Toward the end of his studies at Bowdoin, Gould met Dorothy Florence Wells of Arlington, Massachusetts, the daughter of his father’s friend and fellow railway employee. The two carried on a long-distance relationship via letter (there is an entire box of letters between the two in the Bowdoin College archives) until they married in October of 1932. Following their honeymoon on Prince Edward Island, Gould brought his wife from the “horrors of Boston” to the idyllic family farm in Maine, where his father and grandfather had been born. Together John and Dorothy raised two children: John Jr. (b. June 6, 1938) and Kathryn MacLeod (b. January 4, 1943). As he would do with subsequent books, Gould capitalized on his experiences as a father to write a hu-

morous guide titled, *Pre-Natal Care for Fathers* (1941).

Everyday life was vital to Gould’s success as a writer. As Gould explained: “Up in Maine we don’t . . . write books . . . we live books. We go hunting and fishing, we tend out on Grange meetings, we socialize as time permits, and after we’ve done enough living in Maine the pile is big enough and we send it to a publisher.” His first two books, *New England Town Meeting* and *Pre-Natal Care for Fathers*, were based on personal experiences, but it was his third book, *Farmer Takes a Wife* (1942), that best illustrates his approach. In this book, “Farmer” Gould parlays his wife’s “adjustment to country life” into amusing vignettes that he “peddled” to various national publications, including the Sunday edition of the *New York Times*. These essays were of such high quality the editor of the *Sunday Times*, Lester Markel, urged Gould to gather the pieces and publish them in a book. Gould toyed with the idea until Frances Phillips, an editor with the publishing house of William Morrow & Company, contacted him and suggested that his essays would make a fine book. In a time of economic depression, war, and uncertainty, his reassuring tales of family life in a small town in rural Maine were a source of comfort to readers, and his book climbed onto the bestseller list where it remained for months. Eventually, it was made into a *Reader’s Digest* serial, was a Book of the Month Club selection, and was released in paperback, making it Gould’s biggest moneymaker.¹³

On the eve of the birth of his first child, the farmhouse the family was living in burned to the ground. Undaunted, Gould constructed a one-room log cabin out of trees that he had cut on his farm. His family lived in the cabin until a new house, a replica of the old family home, was completed. Misfortune is grist for a Maine humorist’s mill and Gould made the most of his troubles. As he planned the rebuilding of his farmhouse, Gould contemplated the design and purpose of each room. This led to the writing of *The House That Jacob Built* (1947), which explains not only the building of his farmhouse but also the functional and social purpose of each room. Sometimes a chapter on a particular

room was an excuse to tell (or retell if you have read a fair amount of Gould's work) a favorite story, especially about his grandfather and his Civil War exploits. Most chapters explained a particular room in detail, elaborating on the practical as well as the social function of the room. For example, the cellar was a place used for cold storage of food and hard cider, but it was also a social venue for men. An invitation to look over the cellar, Gould explained, was an offer to drink hard cider out of sight of the wives. Gould's description of the dooryard (the land in front of the house) was used to explain different types of reception of visitors, each of which indicated the type of visit that was to take place. A conversation at the wagon side meant a short stop whereas the invitation to step down from the wagon indicated a longer visit was welcome.¹⁴

The book includes several chapters on the kitchen, which Gould deemed the most important room in the house for it held the wood cookstove that was used for warming people in winter and cooking food all year long. These passages reveal the importance of home-cooked food to Gould, a theme that reappears in a number of his other publications. His "noble philosophy of food" is scattered throughout his publications, but it is most clearly articulated in his book *Monstrous Depravity: A Jeremiad and Lamentation*. Rural Mainers ate three hearty meals: breakfast, dinner (noontime meal of meat, potatoes, pie), and supper. Family meals were important events of every day, and each meal a reflection of a mother's love for her family. The Goulds seldom had store-bought food, but when they did, it was accepted with reluctance, for nothing could compare to the home-made cooking of Hilda Gould. He was appalled at modern groceries and restaurants "corrupted by packaged and processed improvements." He longed for the day when no one was concerned with calories, nutrition, or additives. "We were awful ignorant then," he wrote, "but we ate well and took pleasure in it."¹⁵

The farm was a vital part of who John Gould was and how he fed and supported his family. The money earned through publication provided for the extras in life, but the essentials of life came from Gould's efforts as a small-

scale, subsistence farmer. On his 80-acre farm on Gould Road in Lisbon Falls, he raised vegetables in his garden, harvested fruit from his orchard, kept a cow for milk and chickens for eggs and meat, and sweetened it all with maple syrup from his grove of trees. From his woodlot, he cut timber to cook and to keep his home warm in winter. He was handy with his tools, making devices for local fishermen and farmers from wood that he cut on his farm or from materials he had on hand. He also supplemented his family's diet by hunting and fishing. In this way, Gould was no different from the hundreds of other small farmers in rural Maine. What separated him from his neighbors was his work as a writer and journalist.¹⁶

John Gould, the Journalist (1924-1965)

Writing came naturally for John Gould. He came from a long line of storytellers who shaped his love of telling tales (tall or otherwise) and in so doing, his craft as a writer. He claimed that "[c]hoosing the right father is important in the pursuit of literature," and he picked his father wisely. "I'd not have written much," Gould noted, "without my hand in his, without listening to things he said, without attention to his examples . . ." Franklin Gould was a good storyteller, although many of his stories were not fit for public consumption. He was also an occasional writer who published a few essays and his autobiography, which he wrote and published to prove that writing a book was no great feat. His grandfather, Thomas Gould, was also an inspiration, although most of his stories were tales of his life as a soldier in the Civil War, and his Uncle Ralph Gould wrote autobiographical books as well. From these examples, Gould learned the art of telling tales based on real-life experiences, modified slightly for humorous effect.¹⁷

If the men in his life inclined him toward the art of the story, his mother instilled in him a respect for the English language and a love of good writing. Hilda Gould's schooling on Prince Edward Island was steeped in the English classics, and she could quote long passages from memory of poems such as "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Child-

hood.” Her fidelity to proper English made her quick to point out errors and firm in her insistence on grammatical correctness. Under her tutelage, the family engaged in reading and discussing books. A book that all could enjoy was chosen for the reading, then someone would read the chapter aloud, and the family would discuss what they had heard before moving on to the next chapter. Gould remembered it as a “leisurely kind of reading, and probably a good kind” because it allowed time to reflect and linger over the author’s work to gain insight and appreciation. Gould also drew inspiration from magazines that his family subscribed to and which he read regularly, such as *Youth’s Companion* and *Rural New Yorker*. As he grew older, he followed a *Boston Post* column about interesting aspects of New England life called “The Observant Citizen.” These publications, along with the “kiddie pages” in the local newspapers, inspired Gould to write his pieces patterned after those he read. He would then send them off to the editor and some of his submissions were published.¹⁸

At the age of 16, Gould landed a job as the Freeport correspondent for the *Brunswick Record*. In February of 1924, he wrote to the editor, Robinson Tobey, claiming he could provide better coverage of Freeport news for the *Record* than it was currently getting. Tobey, looking for a way to build readership in Freeport, gave Gould a chance, never realizing how young his new reporter was until he summoned the young man to his office some weeks later. Tobey was shocked to find his Freeport reporter was just a teenager, but he recognized that Gould was a good writer and kept him. Later, Gould took on additional work as the paper’s obituary writer. Freeport was home to many old sea captains who had lived varied and interesting lives. Gould, who had a nostalgic interest in the past, spent much time interviewing the old captains, taking notes on their tall tales and great adventures. When they died, Gould had ample material to write longer obituaries filled with details about the captains’ lives at sea and their adventures abroad. His editor recognized the potential interest these salty tales would generate, so he gave Gould leeway to write expanded obituaries and encouraged him to do

more of the same when other local notables passed away.¹⁹

By making the most of these modest assignments, Gould worked his way into a full-time position at the *Brunswick Record* following his graduation from college in 1931. The job paid \$25 a week, which was a goodly sum for a young reporter in the days of the Great Depression when jobs were scarce and pay was modest. Despite his good work at the *Record*, Gould was never able to get an increase in pay. When the editor irritated Gould by taking credit for some of his work in 1939, he quit. Money was only part of his reason for quitting. The other was Gould’s plan to publish a book on New England town meetings. The idea for his book came from a feature piece that he wrote for the *Lewiston Journal Magazine* and later elaborated on in essays for *Yankee* magazine. The book, *New England Town Meeting*, is a brilliant portrait of the social and political aspects of town meetings in rural Maine communities during the mid-twentieth century. The day began early with the selection of a moderator, and then everyone went home to do chores and prepare food for the community meal that would precede the official town meeting that evening. In just over sixty pages, Gould describes not only the process of a typical town meeting day but also the sense of community that town meeting day instilled in the participants, giving the reader a glimpse into local democracy in action that cannot be gleaned from the records of town meetings alone.²⁰

Quitting the *Record* also gave Gould more time to write for the more lucrative national press. Since 1936, Gould had supplemented his income by writing feature pieces for other papers, such as the *New York Sunday Times*, *The Evening Sun* (Baltimore), and the *Boston Post*. The papers paid well, but the work was sporadic, so when the long-time feature writer for the *Boston Post*, Newton Newkirk, died in 1938, Gould petitioned the editor to hire him as a replacement for the humor writer, but the management of the paper declined. Gould then pitched his talents to the managing editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*, Erwin Canham. Gould’s father and Canham’s father were good friends in high school and had kept in touch

over the years. Erwin knew Franklin Gould and was fond of the older man, so when John submitted work for publication in the fall of 1942, Canham gave him a chance. That was all the advantage Gould would need. For the next sixty-two years, Gould wrote a regular column for the paper. Gould's column, "The Dispatch from the Farm," appeared on the editorial page accompanied by illustrations by Francis Wenderoth Saunders and later by Gene Langley. When the Dispatch moved from the editorial page to the "Home Forum" in the mid-1970s, the drawings ceased, and Gould was instructed to expand his topics beyond the mundane ways of the farm to more literary topics. Over time, he developed a cadre of followers who read his work with religious devotion, anxiously awaiting the next dose of Yankee wit and wisdom from their favorite Maine curmudgeon. This following would be a blessing for his books, but a curse for his work with local newspapers.²¹

Despite his success in the national market, Gould maintained his interest in local journalism. After leaving the *Brunswick Times*, he co-published and edited the *Yarmouth Town Times* from 1939-1941. He then moved on to Goddard College in Vermont to teach journalism and serve as the public relations director for the college from 1940-1942. At the time, several editors made the leap from the field of journalism to public relations, so Gould, enticed by a good salary, decided to make the transition, too. Goddard College was a progressive institution with a John Dewey style curriculum driven by student interest while Gould was "a disciple of Aristotle" dedicated to the proposition that good education came from a rigorous study of the classics. The radical college and the conservative Mainer were a poor match from the beginning, so when his wife, pregnant with their second child, demanded the family return to Maine, Gould gladly complied.²²

Back in Maine, Gould farmed and continued writing for the *Christian Science Monitor* and other newspapers until the spring of 1945, when the longtime editor of the Lisbon *Enterprise*, Charles Mann, died, leaving his widow to manage his affairs. Gould stepped forward and offered to put out the paper for Mann's widow until she could find a buyer. This arrangement

quickly evolved into a buyout by Gould and Jerrie Goud, a printer from Topsham. For the next six years, Gould worked as editor, publishing "All the news that's fit to print and never mind how trivial it seems." Most local news articles came with a generous dose of Gould's wit, making the paper attractive to others outside of the community. Gould also published a regular editorial from Peter Partout, a fictitious character who resided in the imaginary town of Peppermint Corner in western Maine. These editorials ranged from tall tales to humorous anecdotes about Maine life that Gould later gathered into a book, *The Parables of Peter Partout* (1964). By 1948, Gould's best-seller book *Farmer Takes a Wife* and his popular "Dispatches from the Farm" column created a national following for Gould. When Gould's followers learned he was publishing a local paper, subscriptions grew rapidly, but advertising did not. Unfortunately, the cost of postage outweighed the subscription fee, so the paper fell into financial difficulty. Eventually, Gould turned his shares over to his partner leaving him to clean up the financial mess.²³

In the mid-1950s, Gould's writing and activities became more political. His journalistic prominence and his conservative views helped him make friends with powerful members of the business community, such as L.L. Bean, George Morrill of B&M Beans, and Hollis J. Wyman of Hollis J. Wyman Packing Company. Like his friends in business, Gould did not want nor need the helping hand of government and was leery of anyone who did. Every law or expert emanating from Augusta or Washington was wrong-headed and meddlesome. In his mind, nothing good or useful came from "state-house stupidity, federal harassment, and overzealous inspectors who came to make trouble." Gould's conservatism fit nicely with Maine's Republican Party and its pro-business, laissez-faire approach to the economy and its personal responsibility approach to social issues. Like most Republicans, Gould had animosity toward taxes and welfare. He grumbled about the IRS and tax complexity, complained that his taxes were too high and that the money was going to support someone unwilling to work. He viewed paying taxes as an act of charity since some of the money went to benefit those who relied on the government

(local, state, federal) for assistance. On occasion, his conservative views reflected the dark side of conservative politics. In one piece, he derided the unemployed, claiming they were paid to do nothing aside from having babies. In another, he made the absurd claim that the Town Farm (a community-run farm where the indigent lived and worked to support the farm and themselves) was the envy of the community. Everyone who lived on the farm was happy, and those who did not live there wished they could. These conservative views made Gould a favorite of the Republican Party. Senator Margaret Chase Smith was known to stop by his farm on Saturday night for beans and biscuits, and Governor Horace Hildreth came to the dedication of his house when he completed it in 1946.²⁴

In 1953, Gould's political connections led to his appointment by the Eisenhower Administration as an emissary to West Germany to work with the newspaper editors there as they made the transition from state-controlled media under Hitler's regime to a free press in the post-World War II era. From September to December, Gould traveled about West Germany, delivered humorous talks, and wrote a report for the State Department on the condition of journalism in West Germany. Gould made light of his journey, implying it cost the taxpayers a pretty penny for his trip and subsequent report, which made little or no difference. In 1957, he challenged Democrat Governor Edmund S. Muskie on a proposed increase in the fee to obtain a driver's license. Muskie argued the increase was necessary to provide funds for the highway department to maintain the roads, but Gould believed the large tractor-trailer trucks caused the most damage to roads and should bear the cost of repair. In response to the governor's proposal, Gould spearheaded a successful referendum that led to the repeal of the increased fee. The high point of Gould's political involvement came in 1958 when he resurrected the defunct *Enterprise* and turned it into a mouthpiece for conservative politics and causes. Due to Gould's trenchant political commentary, the paper quickly developed a strong statewide following with a subscription list of nearly 200,000. He even used his press for special editions paid for by special interest groups. His stock rose until the 1964 presiden-

tial campaign when Gould let his enthusiasm for Barry Goldwater overcome his common decency. Not content to endorse Barry Goldwater for President, he published a controversial column about Lyndon Baines Johnson's aide, Walter Jenkins, who frequented gay bars in a day when homosexuality was not socially accepted. Gould claimed he dared to publish what others would not, but the backlash against his brash effort led to his resignation. After Gould stepped down as editor, he retreated to the solitude of his farm in Lisbon Falls, where he continued to write for the *Christian Science Monitor* and other publications.²⁵

In retirement, Gould took an extended vacation in Europe, which led to the publication of a book about his long trek across the continent titled, *Europe on Saturday Night; The Farmer and His Wife Take a Trip* (1968). The book holds some interest to readers, but it quickly bogs down into a pattern of stories about one quaint town with good food and good drink after another. More appealing is Gould's second travel memoir, *Maine's Golden Road: a Memoir* (1995), which is part travel memoir of his 30-year "Grandfathers' Retreat" into the Maine woods and part "second opinion" of Henry David Thoreau's views of Maine found in the classic work, *The Maine Woods*. Gould begins every chapter with a quote from Thoreau's book or some reference to Thoreau's trips within the first few paragraphs to set the topic of the chapter. Generally, Gould sides with Thoreau, but often he chides the great lover of Nature for his general lack of Maine wood culture.²⁶

By 1971, age was catching up with Gould, and the farm in Lisbon Falls was getting to be too much for him. When someone broke into the old homestead, the couple decided to move to a smaller place in Friendship, Maine. While he farmed less, his writing continued unabated. Starting in the mid-1970s, Gould began publishing essays in Maine's premier magazine, *Down East*. For much of the 1980s, he was a regular feature writer publishing three or four essays each year. Gould also experimented with history and historical fiction during this time, with modest success. He continued to write, as evidenced by a half dozen or more unpublished

manuscripts among his papers housed at Bowdoin College, but he found it increasingly difficult to find a publisher who wanted to publish his stories. By 1995, Gould gave up farm life entirely and moved to an assisted living facility in Gorham. Retirement home living was not what Gould imagined it would be. “Well, they’ve taken me out of the Maine woods and buttoned me up in the new wilderness of tranquil senility,” he lamented, “but it may well be that I, at a mere ninety, am still much too young for the wonderful comforts of Rhapsody Home.” Care at the facility was impersonal, the food was bland, and the upkeep of the property was poor. Disgusted with the assisted living facility, Gould took to his typewriter and wrote a scathing diatribe, *Tales from Rhapsody Home, or, What They Don’t Tell You About Senior Living* (2000). The couple then moved to another assisted living facility in Rockland in 2000, and Gould died September 1, 2003.²⁷

John Gould, the Writer (Humor, Folklore, and History)

Despite his long and illustrious career as a journalist, John Gould insisted that he was more than simply a newspaper columnist; he considered himself an essayist. At his best, he wrote finely crafted essays that told humorous stories about Maine life, folklore, and history. Unlike most humor writers who draw their material from contemporary events, Gould remained constant in his theme, always writing about Maine, Mainers, and the Maine way of life. “There persists something about Maine,” Gould wrote, “that edifies and amuses the rest of the country.” His persistence of theme arose out of his philosophy of composition. To write well, one must write what one knows and has lived. Speaking in Boston before an audience of literati, Gould explained his technique in his usual understated way. “Up in Maine we don’t . . . write books . . . We *live* books. We go hunting and fishing, we tend out on Grange meetings, we socialize as time permits, and after we’ve done enough living in Maine the pile is big enough, and we send it to a publisher.” For over 80 years, Gould lived among the people

that he loved, observing their daily foibles, the quiet dignity with which they encountered life, and, above all, the way they found humor in all they did. He parlayed this knowledge into gentle essays of bygone days that exuded his love of Maine and the Maine way of life and captivated the minds of people beyond the borders of Maine.²⁸

His skill in gathering the “trifling distinctions” of everyday life that made up his stories was learned through his work as a reporter. Covering local events taught Gould how to examine events to determine the motives and interests of the participants, to tell the story without offending anyone, and to never betray his sources. A good humorist follows similar rules. Maine humor begins with “a character who provides a situation that an author can take and develop into a humorous story.” The best characters are locals or family members, so the author needs to take care to alter the names of those involved to avoid offending his source and to maintain a steady flow of “situations” for stories. The “situation” comes from a mundane event that turns into a calamity before it is resolved in an unusual and humorous way. With a suitable “situation” in mind, he mulls it over, considering the angles, and devising a plan, then, with his “yarn in mind [and his] thoughts in some order,” he begins to write, changing their names and altering the circumstances to protect his sources (characters).²⁹

Publication of Gould’s “yarns” in book form passed through three distinct periods. In the forties, fifties, and sixties, most of what he published was literary humor. Works of literary humor are worthy of reading and study based on their literary merit alone aside from their humorous content. People enjoy the works of authors such as Mark Twain, Bill Nye, James Thurber, and E. B. White, not simply because they have mastered the “the language of humor and—conversely—the humor of language” but also because these essays are well-written. Many of Gould’s early works rise to this level of literature, in large part, because he wrote what he lived. Gould’s publications are so closely tied to his life; one can almost trace the contours of his life by reading his books from this period. Tales of his boyhood are found in *And One to Grow*

On (1949), *Neither Hay nor Grass* (1951), and *Last One In* (1966). His bestseller *Farmer Takes a Wife* (1945) recounts the early years of his marriage and his wife's adjustment to country living. *The House That Jacob Built* was an account of rebuilding his home on the family farm after a fire destroyed the original house. His autobiographical accounts continued in subsequent years with *Next Time Around: Some Things Pleasantly Remembered* (1983), a reflective piece based on a series of events from Gould's life that he would love to do again if given a chance to relive his life again. With the contribution of his last book, *Tales from Rhapsody Home, or, What They Don't Tell You About Senior Living* (2000), a poignant tale of getting old and the difficulties of life in an assisted living facility, the story of Gould's life is complete. These books represent the best of the Gould literary canon and are comprised of well-developed essays of five to six pages in length, each. Subsequent books of humor—*You Should Start Sooner* (1964), *Stitch in Time* (1985), *Old Hundredth* (1987), *Funny about That* (1992), and *It Is Not Now* (1993)—exhibit the trademark Gould wit but lack the depth and beauty of his earlier books. Most of these essays are drawn from his ample pool of published newspaper articles, and so they are less developed, limited to a couple pages in length.³⁰

Gould's work as editor of the *Enterprise* and his political activities slowed his productivity in the fifties, but he did find time to make his initial foray into the field of folklore with *The Fastest Hound Dog in the State of Maine* (1953). The book consists of a tall tale about a dog who could outrun the *Bangor and Aroostook Railroad* that serviced Aroostook County. At the end of the book, Gould included footnotes (which he cautions the reader not to read until after a first reading of the story) that explained the Maine storyteller's craft to the novitiate and exposed his serious approach to the craft of writing folklore. He returned to the genre in earnest in the late sixties and early seventies with four books: *The Jonesport Raffle* (1969), *Twelve Grindstones* (1970), *The Shag Bag* (1972), and *Glass Eyes by the Bottle* (1975). These books consist of the usual stories about sharp trading, Maine weather, Maine inventors, as well as tall

tales about hunting, fishing, and lumberjacks. For some of the stories in *The Jonesport Raffle*, Gould provides a general template of a tale, an exposition of the regional variations, and criticism of the ways that folklorists often get key elements of these stories wrong before launching into his favorite rendition of the tall tale.³¹

Gould took the telling, collecting, publishing, and preserving of Maine folklore seriously. He was determined not only to preserve Maine folklore by capturing it on paper but also to defend it from academic outsiders who came to Maine to research folklore as part of a government-funded study or university research grant. He believed that there was an "elusiveness to folklore" that academics and folklorists were unable to apprehend. Lacking familiarity with Maine's life and lingo, folklorists "from away" often failed to understand the genius of the tale or to distinguish authentic from false folklore. "All Maine coastal folklore requires some special knowledge," Gould argued, "to 'piecen out' the point" and those from away cannot do that." Gould's feisty defense of Maine folklore led to a running feud with folklore scholars who descended on Maine to find, record, and analyze Maine folklore. It aggravated him to know that these scholars were given generous grants to study and detail folklore when he had already done the hard work to master the craft without financial assistance. In particular, he was piqued at Richard M. Dorson, professor of history at Indiana University, editor of the *Journal of American Folklore*, and one of the leading American folklorists in the country. Dorson believed that Mainers "still belong in large measure to the natural order of woods, lakes, mountains, and the sea" and lived "an insulated and inbred life on the coastal islands and the coastal mainland." More important, Dorson "pilfered" some of Gould's tales, especially the tale of the Jonesport Raffle (a story about raffling off a dead horse). Gould mocked Dorson's claim that he had "discovered" the origin of tale, sarcastically writing that had he known the professor was searching for the original, he could have "set the thing down and become a wealthy Indiana professor."³²

Personal animosity aside, Gould did offer some valid criticisms of the field of folklore

studies. He rightly noted that the process of the interview could alter the results, creating what Sandy Ives called the folklore of Maine rather than Maine folklore. The folklore of Maine is the false impression that outsiders have about Maine life that comes from their limited contact with Maine people. Ives argues that outsiders find the behavior of some of the residents charming, and they extrapolate that to the entire population of Maine. The stereotype of the independent, taciturn, slightly behind the times conservative who speaks with an endearing accent may be of interest to those from away, but it does not reflect the reality of life in Maine. Gould makes a similar argument. "Maine folklore has two sides." Gould notes, and "it depends on who tells it." Mainer or visitor. Inexperienced interviewers taint the process by asking leading questions that elicit performance and not the truth. One time a graduate student tried to tease some folklore out of Gould and asked if he would use authentic Maine dialect when telling the story. Such a request begs performance, not accuracy. Experienced scholars may have better technique, Gould argued, but when they turn on the microphone to capture authentic Maine folklore from some local notable, the notable becomes an actor, putting on his best Down East accent and telling the tale as he thinks the interviewer expects. The real folklore gets lost in the performance.³³

What aggravated Gould most was the claim by some scholars that much of Maine folklore originated elsewhere in the country or that a traditional Maine tale was an archetype of a common story found throughout the nation. In a book review of Gould's *The Parables of Peter Partout*, the reviewer drew attention to the Percy Parker story about shooting rats in the shed (fired up into rafters at one and dozens fell dead) claiming it derived from a Midwestern folktale. In response, Gould provided details of how he developed the story and complained that his hard work had been tainted by this false accusation. He also challenged folklorists' claim that all lumbering regions (New England, the Midwest, and the Far West) have certain features in common, such as the legend of Paul Bunyan and phrases such as 'cant dog,' 'skid row,' etc. Gould agreed but insisted that all tall tales about lumbering originated in Maine and migrated with

the lumber industry and lumberjacks who went west following the lumber frontier.³⁴

Gould's foray into the field of folklore paved the way for the final phase of his writing career. The study of folklore involves some degree of historical research as the author tries to determine the origins of a tale, so Gould's pivot to writing history and historical fiction in the eighties and nineties was a natural outcome of his folklore efforts. Most of the essays in *There Goes Maine* (1990) are engaging, amusing, and historically accurate, even if the topics are idiosyncratic incidents from Maine's past. The shift from essay to novel writing, however, was not natural, and the results were disappointing. The idea of writing a novel originated with his wife, who asked him to write something decent and fit to read. Gould had no experience, training, or previous inclination to write a novel, but he thought himself up to the task. He had read many of the great novels, and he thought he could write one, too, if he found an acceptable theme with a good message, gave it substance and dignity, and told it with pleasing and amusing language. Using this formula, he wrote three historical novels: *No Other Place* (1984), *The Wines of Pentagoët* (1986), and *Our Croze Nest: A Morning River Farm Story* (1997). The trilogy tells the story of the fictitious Jabez Knight family, who settled in the Penobscot Bay region of Maine in the colonial period. Through his series of novels, he traces the family history from the colonial era to the present, telling "how Maine was settled, enjoyed as a homeland, and sold to summer folks." W.W. Norton published his first two books, but when the books did not sell well, the publisher refused to publish the third, and Gould was forced to print his last book through a small Maine publishing house. Gould blamed his lack of success on the publisher, but James Brunelle, a sympathetic reviewer, noted the novels were too simple for modern tastes. They started with a happy beginning, were populated with happy characters who lived happy lives, and concluded with a happy ending.³⁵

Conclusion

Despite its small population and its lack of vibrant urban setting to serve as a center for cul-

ture, the state of Maine has produced or been home to a disproportionate number of writers who have made significant contributions to American literature. Beginning with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the most popular and widely read poet of nineteenth-century America, Maine has been home to important poets including Pulitzer Prize winners Edward Arlington Robinson, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Robert P. T. Coffin. Novelists with Maine connections have ranged from Harriet Beecher Stowe, a transplant from Connecticut who wrote one of the most influential novels of her time (*Uncle Tom's Cabin*); Sarah Orne Jewett, a major figure in the "local color" movement; Kenneth Roberts, the "inventor of the modern historical novel"; and Stephen King, the unrivaled master of horror. Likewise, writers with Maine ties, such as Seba Smith, Artemas Ward, Edgar Wilson "Bill" Nye, and E.B. White, have made significant contributions to the field of American

literary humor. Missing from this list is John Gould. In his time, Gould was a skilled essayist, on par with his contemporary E. B. White, who garnered a regular following of thousands of readers from coast to coast. Recent commentators have compared him to Garrison Keillor, E. B. White, Will Rogers, and even Mark Twain, yet most of his work is out of print and all but forgotten. Given his popularity, scholars of American humor need to consider the techniques employed by Gould in his unique brand of Down East humor. Likewise, those interested in the study of Maine literature, folklore, or history will profit by reading Gould's work. His essays offer insight into life in rural Maine in the 1900s, not as a source of factual information, but in the understanding they provide for life as it was lived. For these reasons, Gould's work deserves to be studied and appreciated, for Gould was one of the finest Maine authors of his generation.³⁶

NOTES

1. State of Maine Proclamation reprinted in *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 16, 2002; *Portland Press Herald*, September 11, 1998; "Two Monitor Journalists to be Honored in Maine," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 11, 1998; "The Quintessential Downeast Storyteller," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 3, 2003.
2. The title of Franklin Gould's autobiography.
3. John Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1978) 100-104, 128-138, 203-209. Gould was named for his maternal and paternal grandfathers John Jenkins and Thomas Gould; John Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*. Unpublished manuscript. John Gould Collection. George J. Mitchell Special Collections & Archives, Bowdoin College Library, Brunswick, Maine, 1; Franklin Gould, *A Maine Man in the Making* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1949), 1-6, 92-96; For purposes of clarity, John Gould will be referred to as 'Gould' in these notes. Franklin Gould will be referred to as 'F. Gould.'
4. Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 105; Gould waxes eloquent on his hometown in the introductory essay of *And One to Grow On*: John Gould, *And One to Grow On* (New York: William Morrow, 1949), 11-18; Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 66-69; F. Gould, *A Maine Man in the Making*, 204-206.
5. For a more detailed description of the Freeport of Gould's youth see his "Introduction" in *L.L. Bean, Inc.: Outdoor Sporting Specialties*, edited and researched by William David Barry (Portland, Maine: Privately Printed for L.L. Bean, Inc. by the Anthoensen Press, 1987), x-xii.
6. Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 101, 105-106; Gould, *And One to Grow On*, 31.
7. Gould, *And One to Grow On*, 89-90; Another example given by Gould was harvesting ice in the winter, 83-90; John Gould, *Last One In: Tales of a New England Boyhood, a Gently Pleasing Dip into a Cool Soothing Pool of the Not-so-long-Ago, So to Speak* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1966), 23; John Gould, *Old Hundredth*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987), 41-43.
8. Gould, *Last One In*, 72-79, 113-120; Ralph Earnest Gould was a wit and Maine author, too. See *Yankee Shopkeeper* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1946); *Yankee Drummer* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1947); *Yankee Boyhood* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1950); Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 127-129; Gould, *Dispatches from Maine: 1942-1992* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994), 197-199.
9. Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 128, 203-204, 210; Gould, *Last One In*, 39, 41, 48, 91-98; For more tales

- on Gould's religion see "The Pipe Organ," 39-47 and "The Prayer Meeting," 242-247; *And One to Grow On*, 195-201.
10. Gould, *Last One In*, 92, 133-134.
 11. Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 63, 136-137, 143; Gould, *And One to Grow On*, 217-222.
 12. Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 111, 208-209; Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 175-184, 185-190; Douglas Scribner, "The Humorist Takes Maine Seriously," *Maine Times*, November 10, 1972.
 13. Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 4, 9; John Gould, *Pre-Natal Care for Fathers* (Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Daye Press, 1941); John Gould, *New England Town Meeting* (Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Daye Press, 1940); John Gould, *Farmer Takes a Wife* (New York: William Morrow, 1945). This book was chosen as one of the 100 best books about Maine. Laura Fecych Sprague, ed., *The Mirror of Maine: One Hundred Distinguished Books That Reveal the History of the State and the Life of Its People* (Orono, ME.: The University of Maine Press and the Baxter Society in association with the Maine Historical Society, 2000), 99; Susan Rayfield, "An Afternoon with John Gould," *Lewiston Maine Sunday*, December 6, 1987.
 14. John Gould, *The House that Jacob Built* (New York: William Morrow, 1947), 15-18, 33-41, 136-148, 231; Woodbury, "The Sage of Lisbon Falls," 43. The opening of Gould's new house was covered in the *Boston Post*, November 15, 1946.
 15. John Gould, *The Shag Bag, Which, Considering Our Peculiar [sic] Present, Has No Motive, Purpose, and Dedicated Aim, and Is Meant Only to Be Amusing — Which Not Very Much Is Nowadays, Is It?* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), 39; Gould, *And One to Grow On*, 187-194; Gould, *The House that Jacob Built*, 39-56, 104-111, 119-130; John Gould, *Monstrous Depravity: A Jeremiad and a Lamentation [About Things to Eat]* (New York: William Morrow, 1963); Gould, *And One to Grow On*, 190-191.
 16. Rayfield, "An Afternoon with John Gould"; *Neither Hay Nor Grass*, 142-148.
 17. Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 100, 113.
 18. Gould, *The House that Jacob Built*, 168-169; Gould, "The Quintessential Downeast Storyteller," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 3, 2003.
 19. Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 164-166; Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 114-120.
 20. Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 196-201; Jim Baumer, *The Perfect Number: Essays & Stories*, Vol. I (Lewiston, Maine: Rivervision Press, 2014), "Writing About John Gould," 61-71; Joseph A. Conforti, *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to the Mid-Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 306.
 21. Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 209-212; John Gould, *You Should Start Sooner; In Which Widely Separated Topics Are Strangely Discussed by an Old Cuss* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1964), ix-xii; *Dispatches from Maine: 1942-1992*, v; Gould's first piece was "Buzz-saws and Christmas Trees," published October 21; John Gould, Untitled, *Christian Science Monitor*, October 23, 1992. For background on the Home Forum see: *A Home Forum Reader*, compiled and edited by Frederic Hunter (Boston: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1989), II-III.
 22. Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 216-218.
 23. Gould, *Lewiston Evening Journal*, July 14, 1945; Gould wrote a glowing piece on Mann: "Portrait of a Country Editor," *New York Times*, October 15, 1944; Baumer, "Writing About John Gould," 63-64; Part of the tall tale genre, these humorous pieces were later gathered into a book, *The Parables of Peter Partout* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1964); Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 219-223.
 24. John Gould, *It Is Not Now: Tales of Maine* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993), 146; Despite their age difference, Gould was friends with the iconic retailer, writing introductions to the history of Bean's company and his autobiography. James L. Witherell, *L.L. Bean: The Man and His Company* (Gardiner, Maine: Tilbury House, Publishers, 2011), 48-50, 54, 65-66; L.L. Bean, *My Story*. "Introduction," in *L.L. Bean, Inc.: Outdoor Sporting Specialties* edited and researched by William David Barry. Portland, Maine: Privately Printed for L.L. Bean, Inc. by the Anthoensen Press, 1987, x-xii; L.L. Bean, *My Story: The Autobiography of a Down-East Merchant* (Freeport, Maine: The Dingley Press, 1961), 7-11; For a survey of Republican politics in Maine, see. Judd, et al, *Maine*, 193-216, 370-390, 506-586 (passim); John Gould, *Neither Hay nor Grass*, (New York: William Morrow, 1951), 123-124, 211-216; Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 159-162; Gould, *And One to Grow On*, 169-177; Gould, *Dispatches from Maine*, 22-23.
 25. Gould, *Playmates, People, Picnics*, 228-236; David O. Woodbury, "The Sage of Lisbon Falls," 44.; "Author John Gould is Happy He Quit Editor Role," *Maine Sunday Telegram*, April 4, 1965; "Author Named Editor," *New York Times*, November 2, 1958. Gould also mentored a budding young writer, Stephen King, who worked

for the *Enterprise* as a sports reporter. King did not realize that the Gould who edited the Lisbon *Enterprise* was also the famed Maine humorist. Stephen King, *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* (New York: Scribner, 2000), 55-58.

26. John Gould, *Europe on Saturday Night; The Farmer and His Wife Take a Trip* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968); John Gould, *Maine's Golden Road: A Memoir*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995); Gould, *Maine's Golden Road*, 18, 92.

27. John Gould, *Tales from Rhapsody Home, or, What They Don't Tell You About Senior Living* (Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2000), 182.

28. Gould, "Apology" in front cover *This Trifling Distinction*; Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 9; Gould, "Good as Gould," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 5, 2003.

29. Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 3-13, 52-53, 73-83, 88-93, 188. Gould claimed, "Before I begin writing the task is pretty well finished."

30. David B. Kesterson, "The Literary Comedians and the Language of Humor," *Studies in American Humor*, New Series 2, Vol. I, Special Issue in Honor of Jack Meathenia (June, 1982), 44-51; Stephen L. Tanner, "The Art of Self-Deprecation in American Literary Humor," *Studies in American Humor*, New Series 3, No. 3 (1996), 54-65; John Gould, *And One to Grow On* (New York: William Morrow, 1949); Gould, *Neither Hay Nor Grass* (New York: William Morrow, 1951); Gould, *Last One In: Tales of a New England Boyhood, a Gently Pleasing Dip Into a Cool Soothing Pool of the Not-so-long-ago, so to Speak* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1966); *The House that Jacob Built* was chosen by famed F.M. O'Brien as one of the top twelve books to read about Maine: Wayne Curtis, "Maine's All-Time Top Dozen," *Down East* (November, 1990), 70; John Gould, *Next Time Around: Some Things Pleasantly Remembered* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983); Gould, *You Should Start Sooner; in Which Widely Separated Topics Are Strangely Discussed by an Old Cuss* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1949); Gould, *Stitch in Time* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1985); Gould, *Old Hundredth* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987); Gould, *Funny About That* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992); Gould, *It Is Not Now: Tales of Maine* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993).

31. John Gould, *The Fastest Hound Dog in the State of Maine* (Thorndike, Maine: Thorndike Press, 1953). 10-11. Uncharacteristically, he urges the reader to read the story aloud using a proper Maine accent on page 3; John Gould, *The Jonesport Raffle, and Numerous Other Maine Veracities* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), *Twelve Grindstones; or, A Few More Good Ones, Being Another Cultural Roundup of Maine Folklore, Sort of, Although Not Intended to be Definitive, and Perhaps Not So Cultural, Either* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970), *The Shag Bag, Which, Considering Our Perculiar [sic] Present, Has No Motive, Purpose, and Dedicated Aim, and Is Meant Only to Be Amusing — Which Not Very Much Is Nowadays, Is It?* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), *Glass Eyes by the Bottle: Some Conversations About Some Conversation Pieces* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1975).

32. Gould, *The Jonesport Raffle*, 2 10-11; Richard M. Dorson, *Buying the Wind* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), 21-26, 69; John Gould, *Stitch in Time*, with illustrations by Consuelo Eames Hanks (New York: W.W. Norton, 1985), 48-49.; *The Jonesport Raffle*, 14, 46-50. Gould sought to remedy these misconceptions by writing a dictionary of Maine language and phrases. *Maine Lingo: Boiled Owls, Billdads & Wazzats*, in Collaboration with Lillian Ross and the Editors of *Down East* magazine (Camden, Maine: Down East Magazine, 1975).

33. Gould, *Stitch in Time*, 48-51; Edward D. Ives, "Maine Folklore and the Folklore of Maine: Some Reflections on the Maine Character and Down-East Humor." *Maine Historical Society Quarterly*, Volume 23, No. 3 (Winter 1984), 111-132; Gould, *The Jonesport Raffle*, 1, 5.

34. Gould, *This Trifling Distinction*, 34-36; Gould, *The Jonesport Raffle*, 122-127.

35. James Brunelle, "A tale of two Elzadas," *CSM* May 23, 2003; *Maine Sunday Telegram*, October 6, 1985; Gould, *There Goes Maine!: A Somewhat History, Sort of, of the Pine Tree State* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990); Gould, *No Other Place* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984), *The Wines of Pentagoët* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1986), *Our Croze Nest*. (Nobleboro, Maine: Blackberry Books, 1997).

36. Robert Lecker and Kathleen R. Brown, ed., *An Anthology of Maine Literature* (Orono: University of Maine at Orono Press, 1982), xviii-xxi; William David Barry, "Maine & the Arts," in Richard W. Judd, et al, ed., *Maine: The Pine State from Prehistory to the Present* (Orono: University of Maine at Orono Press, 1995), 480-505. Gould offers his own explanation of why Maine has had a high proportion of gifted writers in *This Trifling Distinction* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1978), 121-127; Jim Baumer, "Farmer Boys," *Down East* (November 2015), 126; David O. Woodbury, "The Sage of Lisbon Falls," *Down East* (October 1959), 12.