

Constance Lindsay Skinner

Author and Editor



Constance Lindsay Skinner

Author and Editor

*Sketches of Her Life and Character,
With a Checklist of Her Writings
And the "Rivers of America" Series*

General Editor

ANN HEIDBREder EASTMAN

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*The National Officers and the Eleven Chapters
of the
Women's National Book Association
affectionately dedicate this book to*

ANNE J. RICHTER

*Editor, R. R. Bowker Company, 1937-1970
President, New York Chapter, 1946-1948
Winner of the Constance Lindsay Skinner Award, 1957
National President, 1958-60 and 1968-70
Bookwoman always*

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ONE

Introduction

ANN HEIDBREder EASTMAN

The Women's National Book Association has presented the Constance Lindsay Skinner Award since 1940, the year after her death, to outstanding American book-women who have made an exceptional contribution to books and, through books, to society. Forty-two women have won the award, among them Barbara Ringer, Helen Honig Meyer, Margaret K. McElderry, Augusta Baker, Pearl Buck, Eleanor Roosevelt, Marchette Chute, and Amy Loveman. (A complete list of award winners appears in Chapter Five.) The award was suggested by Alice Klutas to honor Constance Lindsay Skinner as an active member of the New York chapter of the Women's National Book Association, one of the founders of the WNBA publication, *The Bookwoman*, and one of the first women to hold a major editorial position in American adult book publishing.

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The Women's National Book Association is now publishing this volume to commemorate Constance Lindsay Skinner, a remarkable bookwoman who, inspiring and enchanting many, made a lasting contribution as an author and editor. In it we intend to proclaim her genial talents to WNBA members, CLS winners, book collectors and antiquarian booksellers, librarians and educators, feminists—and to all others who care about books and the people who make them.

Little was known at the time of Skinner's death about her personal life and work; across the years less and less has been remembered. Only once in the last twenty-five years did a speaker at a CLS ceremony offer any biographical information. In 1968, Doris S. Patee, editor of children's books for Macmillan for 35 years, described Skinner in her tribute to the recipient that year:

I knew her very well. Her books for children, published by the Macmillan Company, were very popular when I first became a publisher. There was *Silent Scot*, *The White Leader*, *Andy Breaks Trail*, and many others. A woman with a great knowledge of early American history, she drew on this material for stories that were well written, exciting and often true. I published only her last children's book, for soon after I came to Macmillan, she accepted the big assignment of the editorship of the *Rivers of America* series, and left the field of children's books, temporarily we all felt, but sadly enough she did not live long enough to return.

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She did not want me to think that there was anything personal in her leaving the Macmillan fold so soon after I arrived and this is perhaps one reason that she took such care to do so many things for me, too personal to mention.

If any of you did know her, her personality would be unforgettable. She was a large woman, and usually wore brightly colored dresses, and more than that usually red ones, her favorite color. They were perhaps the 1937 version of the shift, but also, with many chains of beads, bracelets, dangles and bangles, and perhaps a picture hat. She was a kind of actress and loved this role. She often seemed like an Indian princess, and she did claim Indian blood in her heritage. But underneath this rather amazing appearance, she was a most remarkable person—a capable and inspired writer and editor, an historical scholar, a warm and generous friend who gave many a young writer much needed encouragement and often financial aid. She was a great promoter of children's books, and to all her contacts and interests, she brought a kind of stubborn integrity.

In October, 1975, we learned more about Skinner when Mary Benjamin, the autograph dealer, offered a letter from CLS to a young man dying of tuberculosis in Saranac Lake, New York. Mary V. Gaver, then President of the WNBA and the 1973 recipient of the award, suggested that we buy it. This letter—the only one embodying Skinner's outlook on life and art to come down to us—is published here as Chapter Two.

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It was not easy to find out about Skinner, nor to separate the facts of her life from the fictions—some of her own creation. Early in 1976 I wrote to Frederick R. Rinehart, formerly vice president of Farrar & Rinehart, publishers of the Rivers of America series, who replied as follows:

Unfortunately practically all those who knew Constance Lindsay Skinner well are no longer with us; but even if they were I would doubt they could shed any startling light on her life. Seemingly outgoing with all of us, she nevertheless kept herself strictly under wraps. There were three or four women writers such as Margaret Widdemer, who lived in the same building at 57th and Park, but even they—and they're probably all dead now—knew nothing more than that she was born on the trail somewhere in the Northwest province of Canada. Just somewhere in the wilderness, and I have no idea where her parents were going or why.

When one of her neighbors called to say that she had been found dead sitting in a straight-back chair and correcting the galleys of Carl Carmer's *The Hudson*, my brother Stanley went up at once to the apartment and I put on my hat and coat and went downtown to the city authority to get permission to remove her from her apartment to a funeral home. She left no will in her safety deposit box and nothing was found indicating any relatives whatsoever. In the absence of any instructions, we arranged for a memorial service at a non-denominational church on, as I remember, Lexington Avenue in the 60's. She was not buried until months

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later when a nephew turned up (I think from Nebraska) and then we were able to arrange for interment.

All this is indicative of her secretive nature. Despite this, her neighbors liked her, as did Carl and the other authors she worked with on the Rivers series.

She was a strange, remote and fascinating woman and the only other thing I can add is that she wore more junk jewelry, sashes and bows and other adornment than any woman I ever knew. She left drawers full of them which we discovered when I went up with the official . . . [to] make a rough estimate of the value of her estate.

I'm sorry not to be more helpful, but as you can see even alive Constance Lindsay Skinner was almost impossible to get to know, and now after all these years the enigma remains just that. . . .

In 1977 I was living in Pittsburgh, working at Chatham College. The College librarian, Jan Thomson, and a student, Dorothy Adams, became interested in Skinner and agreed to join me in doing research. Jan did some preliminary work on a bibliography of Skinner's work which later was compiled by Marilyn Norstedt (Chapter Six) and Dorothy agreed to write the biographical essay (Chapter Three). We gathered information from the West and Canada, as well as from the Library of Congress and the usual published reference sources. I began to hunt for other individuals who had known Skinner personally, but Carl Carmer died on September 11, 1976, the very day I was writing to ask him about her, and I thought that Margaret Widdemer had long

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since died until I read her obituary in the *New York Times* on July 15, 1978.

At the CLS ceremony in 1976, Jan and I talked with Helen Hoke Watts, who had known Skinner from Helen's arrival in New York in 1937 until Skinner died two years later. Dorothy interviewed Helen in New York, and later Helen wrote the reminiscence which makes up Chapter Four.

Without the help of Mary Gaver, Jan Thomson, Dorothy Adams, Doris Patee, Helen Hoke Watts, Frederick R. Rinehart, Louise Seaman Bechtel, Eleanor Steiner-Prag, and many others, this manuscript could not have been written. Without the editorial work done by Patterson Smith and the bibliographic work done by Marilyn Norstedt of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Libraries, the manuscript would never have become a book.

Now, in its sixty-third year, the Women's National Book Association presents this special book to celebrate its past, to salute its future, and to pay its affectionate respects to Anne J. Richter, to whom it is dedicated with gratitude for her generous support of the WNBA and her friends its members.

—*Ann Heidbreder Eastman, President
Women's National Book Association*

*Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University
Blacksburg, Virginia*

TWO

Letter to Owen Small

CONSTANCE LINDSAY SKINNER

[Letter written by Constance Lindsay Skinner to Owen Small of Saranac Lake, N.Y.]

12 E 11th St New York
Dec 3/30

My dear Mr. Small:

Your letter about my poems and what they have done for you, freeing you from a sense of bondage to disease & pain, has touched me very deeply. Today I mailed you a copy of my latest novel "Red Willows," set in my own northern British Columbia; because I have rec'd a few letters about it from readers who felt that it gave them liberation from the pressure of materialistic detail, and a feeling of beauty and

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happiness. Perhaps it will be able to do something to hasten your permanent cure. Beauty restores the soul, and the soul mends the body. My love for that vast wild northern beauty, which seems always to me symbolical of strength, joy and freedom, as if calling to man to rise and claim his birthright, is still the dominant interest and passion in my life, though I have perforce been away from the north for many years. Undoubtedly my own love for it and my almost religious faith in the power of its beauty flows into what I write; or rather, my writing flows from it, as a stream from its headwaters.

It is a pleasure to love poetry; and I am glad that mine is beginning to undo the sad tragedy perpetrated on your mind and imagination in college! No doubt there are teachers of literature somewhere in U S A who feel literature as art and beauty and really help students to a true appreciation of it. But it hasn't been my good fortune to meet them. What I have seen of literary teaching has scared & horrified me & I still thank God I never came under its influence myself—never having attended a school or a college.

Now, I'm afraid those professors gave you a notion which still sticks, namely, that you have to "understand" poetry, about as you have to understand a chemical formula or a latin verb. Thank heaven we don't! Pure poetry flows for our moments of spiritual splendor, it frees us from the shackles of just that sort of mentality—microscopic thinking. No such

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mind has ever explained "The Ancient Mariner" or "Kubla Khan," but, alas, many such minds are ruining these great flames of pure poetry for thousands of pupils in our schools. I don't understand them but, reading them, launching on their rhythmic and the strong fiery music of their words, I too feel something of what Coleridge felt; I am caught up to see, in a measure, the beauty which animated him as he wrote.

I can't tell you what "Indian Spring, Paiiya Sings" means. I don't know! Not line by line. It rushed upon me & by me in a rhythm and I ran after it! A feeling of the cool, swift northern spring, with all nature and its creatures responding—liberation again, symbolized by that Northern Spring which has to battle with and banish a deeply-gripping tenacious winter. And all this too is symbolical of the spirit which has to battle with the tenacious materialistic grip and the cold overhanging shadow of modern civilization in its harshest & drabest aspects—the mechanistic world & the economic & animal view of man & of oneself. Anyway, my songs have pierced that cold drab shadow for you & lifted your mind from the clutch of a stricken body and thereby given you new hope. To know this is a great reward to me. If you will turn to the "Prayer," song of Kanillak, you will understand how your letter telling of rekindled life and hope is one answer to that song, which is my own daily Prayer—one of the few really personal expressions in the book.

Was Whittier wholly spoiled for you at college? Thinking

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of your situation some lines of his, very simply written, come to my mind:

*“The healing of the seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain.”*

Wishing you well,

*Sincerely yours,
Constance Lindsay Skinner*

12 E 11th St New York
Dec 3/80

My dear Mr Small

Your letter about my poems and what they have done for you, freeing you from a sense of bondage to disease & pain, has touched me very deeply. Today I mailed you a copy of my latest novel "Red Willow", set in my own northern British Columbia, because I have read a few letters about it from readers who felt that it gave them liberation from the pressure of materialistic detail, and a feeling of beauty and happiness. Perhaps it will be able to do something to hasten your permanent cure. Beauty restores the soul, and the soul mends the body. My love for that vast wild northern beauty, which seems always to me symbolical of strength, joy and freedom, as if calling to man to rise and claim his birthright, is still the dominant interest and passion in my life, though I have perhaps been away from the North for many years. Undoubtedly my own love for it and my almost religious faith in the power of

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And all this too is symbolical
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Was Whittier who spoiled for
you at college? Thinking of your
situation some lines of his,
very simply written, come to my
mind "The healing of the seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain"

Wishing you well,
Sincerely yours
Langford Lindsey Skinner

THREE

Biographical Sketch

DOROTHY ADAMS

Constance Skinner's childhood has been romanticized with time, and we can be sure that she would have few objections to the fascinating story her early years have become. A few colorful facts can be presented here, and we can explore individually the images into which they spread, an experience in imagination Constance may well have intended for us.

She was born in 1879 in Quesnel, British Columbia, a fur-trading post to the northeast of Vancouver. Her father, Robert James Skinner, was a factor for the Hudson Bay Company, a position which entailed policing and caring for the company's territory, in addition to handling the business transactions of the enterprise. He also inspected timber for the Canadian government, aided in the wilderness by the Indian Tselistah, of the

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area Squamish tribe. Constance developed an attachment, a feeling of kinship, to the Indians, playing with the children and observing, with intrigue, the customs of their parents.

The Indians of British Columbia were expert fishermen, utilizing techniques ranging from netting and spearing to the use of intricate traps. Their other resource was the forest of giant cedars and pines, which they felled to build homes on the seacoast. Climatologists find the climate in this territory one of the most favored for humans, animals and vegetation; the Indians shared the interior, where Skinner was born, with the salmon, the red deer, and the beaver. The culture and legacy of this Cariboo region were to be the inspiration for much of Skinner's work, particularly for her poetry. She wrote in the foreword to *Songs of the Coast Dwellers* of the coast of British Columbia,

. . . with its continuous panorama of lights and shadows; its falling and dissolving mists streaked with a wine-red glow where the timbered, white-capped mountains battle through them into the clear of the sun; its seas running blue and green and slate into a hundred narrow inlets, there to lie quiet in the form of crystal mirrors reflecting the emerald flanks and snowy peaks of the steep shores; and the long soft deep soughing of miles of great cedars dragging their lower branches over the rocks. . . .

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Originally discouraged from extensive settlement by the trading companies, British Columbia did have a period of growth as a result of a gold strike and subsequent rush in 1858. Still, the area in which Skinner was born did not expand again until plans for the Panama Canal were completed and merchants grew confident that they would be able to compete with Eastern markets.

Constance, then, was raised in an area largely wild, with the fine things of European culture in her home. She claimed her heritage to be three-fourths Scotch, the principal nationality of the settlers in the fur-trade. The Skinners lived in a large cedar house, and here Constance was tutored by her parents from their extensive library of British literature. The family lived five hundred miles from the railroad, and Constance received little schooling until age fourteen, when she enrolled in a private school in Vancouver. (In later life she often referred to her lack of formal education.)

In 1919 *The Bookman* published a note stating that Constance Lindsay Skinner was descended from Lady Anne Lindsay, an eighteenth-century Scots balladeer, and Sir David and Margaret Lindsay, historians. This information was repeated elsewhere, but never with a source. Constance was named Constance Annie Skinner on her birth certificate, after her mother Annie, and it is

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believed that Constance herself adopted the “Lindsay” later. The speculations concerning her lineage are an interesting feature of the Skinner aura.

Although her early years seem to have been filled with the best of enriched experience, Constance had an innate spring of independence. As a child, she would run into the forest to read, escaping from the world of adults that enveloped her. She was fascinated by travel, and the books she could obtain were her means of exploring foreign places. Her first recorded work was a three-act operetta for children, which she wrote as a schoolgirl, and which was produced with her words and music. After several years of contributing editorials and political features to the Vancouver *Evening World*, she applied for employment at age eighteen to a Los Angeles paper by letter. Upon arrival in California, she was almost sent home by the publisher, who hadn't realized her youth.

For the Los Angeles *Times* and the *Examiner*, Skinner covered the features—stories of fires, concerts, murders, and sudden deaths. She spent a summer on the La Jolla ranch of Helen Modjeska, a Shakespearean actress whom she had met while interviewing her. During these years on her own, about which little is known, Skinner developed well her journalistic and academic talents, although to neither field would she ever feel entirely suited.

Skinner's next move was to Chicago, where she

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joined the staff of the *Chicago American*. We can assume that some form of misfortune had come upon the Skinners, for in Chicago Constance was caring for her mother and trying to support the two of them with her journalistic talents. Here again in Chicago, the character developed in her childhood was strengthened by her new responsibilities, furthering in her a deep integrity and unyielding drive. Her contemporaries often mentioned these values in describing her, and she stressed their importance to others, particularly to young writers whom she guided later in her career.

In 1915, Skinner left her journalistic career to write independently. Her first play, *David*, had been presented in Carmel, California, in 1910. Skinner moved to New York City to serve as a literary critic on the *New York Herald Tribune*, and it was in New York that her second play, *Good Morning, Rosamund!*, was produced in 1917. Described by the *Springfield Republican* as a story in which Skinner "mildly satirizes life in a small community," the *New York Times* found the play "a bit too preposterous to be as amusing as it might easily have been." The reviewer in the *Philadelphia Evening Ledger* applauded, however, writing, "The story is told with consummate literary art."

Skinner gradually immersed herself in the academic world, researching the nation's advancing frontiers, following the movements to colonize the Pacific Coastal

states. In 1919, her *Pioneers of the Old Southwest* was published in Yale University's "Chronicles of America" series. Subtitled "A Chronicle of the Dark and Bloody Ground," the volume dealt with the people of Kentucky and Tennessee, the French traders, Indians, and frontiersmen such as Boone. The *New York Times* praised her book for its "succinctness, clarity, and charm." Skinner's next work in the series was *Adventures of Oregon*, which traced the fur-trade enterprise through the expeditions of Lewis and Clark and the representatives of John Jacob Astor. The Yale University series was viewed as "an ambitious attempt to present American history to the general reader."

Skinner's writings were frequently criticized by academics for historical inaccuracy. The two Chronicles were reviewed as "highly readable, but rather facile and factually imprecise." Skinner carried on an extended correspondence with Frederick Jackson Turner, and throughout her career supported the Turnerian geographical interpretation of history, which opposed that of Charles A. Beard. Thus Skinner combined her literary talent and feel for the land with historical movements and trends, rather than with detailed events.

After *Adventures in the Wilderness* was published in 1925, Skinner began writing children's books, perhaps feeling her style would be well suited to this field. *Becky Landers: Frontier Warrior*, set in Kentucky, was praised

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as “fascinating reading” for older children. *Silent Scot: Frontier Scout* follows two boys and an Indian friend through Revolutionary War adventures in Tennessee. *White Leader* and *Tiger Who Walks Alone* came next, and reviewers mentioned her “huge and devoted public” and her “exuberance.”

During these years Skinner was researching many cultures in depth. She had written to Frederick Jackson Turner that she had known South Americans in her British Columbia, and she studied the Latin American background intensively for the setting for *Tiger Who Walks Alone*. Earl Parker Hanson, in *Transformation: The Story of Modern Puerto Rico*, tells of meeting Skinner at a gathering of his Puerto Rican friends:

Invariably present at the Sunday evening gatherings, as a co-hostess with Muna (Muna Lee, who was then the wife of Munoz Marin), was a woman who soon became another of my valued friends. A mountain of a woman, dressed in fantastic red plush, with dyed hair and mascaraed eyes, with gaudy costume jewelry jangling on her arms, she had an incisive wit which tended to frighten all who didn't know her well—as it was later to throw the fear of God into the various writers who worked with her. This was Constance Lindsay Skinner, who had been raised in the Canadian wilderness as the daughter of a Hudson's Bay Company factor, had become one of Hearst's first sob sisters and a close friend (and worshipful admirer) of Jack London, and later had

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done valuable historical research and writing on the American scene. When I first met her she was writing boys' books and stories. Later she originated the "Rivers of America" series of books, became its first editor and built it up to its well-deserved prominence, importance, and popularity.

On my first visit to Munoz' house, that terrifying woman called me peremptorily to her side, asked my name, and said: "Tell me about yourself, Young Man!"

I spilled over about Chile, the Atacama Desert, the Andes, about mining camps and Inca graves, water holes, condors, and lost Indian villages, Andean llama herders and Americans living in mining camps for years without ever seeing or sensing anything except their clubs, their bars, their camp politics, and the inferior "natives" with whom one must under no circumstances have social contact lest one be regarded as going native.

Like almost everybody at those gatherings, with the possible exception of myself, Constance had the rare quality of being not only a good talker but also a good listener. After some minutes of apparently rapt attention, she began to chuckle.

"Young man," she said, "you are an explorer and I like you. I love explorers because they are bold, free men who recognize no boundaries—geographic, intellectual, or moral!"

Except for the moral part, her description of explorers fitted Luis and Muna's Sunday evenings to a T.

By 1934 Skinner had written eleven adventure stories for children, published by Macmillan and Coward-

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McCann. The children's librarians welcomed these books warmly, because children had been demanding Indian and pioneer stories and previously there were few. Constance Lindsay Skinner's books were also unusual in that many had young heroines in the center of the action on their respective frontiers. *Roselle of the North* focuses on a girl in the Canadian Northwest who is adopted by Cree Indians. One critic viewed the story as "superior to many books for girls because of the imaginative and sympathetic spirit in which it is written." Cornelia Meigs praised these books for children for their realism and "splendid vitality."

In 1930, Skinner departed from her fiction to write *Songs of the Coast Dwellers*, a volume of poetry inspired by the Squamish Indians of her native British Columbia. The poems are not translations, but lyrical interpretations of mood and Indian life, songs cadenced in Indian rhythm. The poetry won prizes from *Poetry* and the *London Bookman*, and several poems were translated into German, French, and Russian. Louis Untermeyer and Granville Hicks spoke of the "delicately woven lyrics of a texture unique in our literature." It was this volume which inspired Owen Small, a man dying in Saranac Lake, New York, to write to Skinner thanking her for the poems which had helped ease his pain. Skinner's reply contains much of her philosophy of poetry and her work, and she refers him to the poem "A Prayer of Kan-

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il-lak” for further peace. She also sent him her novel *Red Willows* of 1929, the previous year.

In “Song of the Four Mornings: Spring Dawn,” Skinner characterizes the tribe’s anticipation of the season:

*White across the clear green grass
Comes one with cold sparkling step.
Unseen his tall floating form, unheard his voice;
(He knows not yet the first word, the word that wakes us!)*
It is Pai-iyā-Kwi.
*Like the feet of a young chief, which have not strayed to love,
Is the cool bright swiftness of his coming.*
*The ridges, wind-topped, front the East
Where Pai-iyā-Kwi was born.*
*On the western slopes we dwell, we the Coast Dwellers,
Facing the warm west.*
*Yet we love the coming of Pai-iyā-Kwi
From the hidden place of sunrise.*
*We love the breath of his young cool thoughts
And the white pattering of his feathered moccasins;
(They stir the small grass, they toss the little sand!)*
*We love the rattling of his hundred red arrows
Where the stark crimson willows stab the canyon-side
To drip waters.*
*We love the clear shining from his eyes;
They have seen nothing nearer than the windy sky
And the sea’s long ripple, bright and salt.*
Ai-hi! we love Pai-iyā-Kwi!
*Because he knows not the sun will set more crimson than the
willows,*

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*And its wounded strength sleep upon the dark;
Because he knows not the still sod stirs beneath the grasses
With a life swifter than his feet.
O Pai-ya-Kwi, Youth, seeing not clouds and shadows;
Seeing not Love waits!*

During the 1930's, Skinner developed an idea for a series of books that would trace the history of the world through its great rivers. She wrote that she "was convinced that rivers, the perpetual motion in the quiet land, had had, and must ever have, a powerful influence on the temperament and the imagination of mankind." Frederick Jackson Turner suggested that the project, though quite worthy, could occupy a lifetime; Skinner then scaled down her plan to a series on the rivers of North America. As she contemplated the folklore, and "human interest" material in the subject, she determined that the works should be literary first, then historical, and should be written by authors from the individual river domains. Turner's influence on writers, Skinner said, was to bring their thoughts "more intensely upon America. America, as a land and nation unique in the world, having a history like no other."

Skinner left Macmillan and began to look for a publisher for the new series. Those who knew her during those years described her as tolerant but tough-minded, with an inner strength and "strict private judgments." She was dark and striking, attributing her Spanish looks

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to a paternal ancestor. She wore dresses of her own design, often in red or black, accompanied by flamboyant costume jewelry and hats. She was often said to have had a unique sense of style, always striking and individual. In these later years, she lived in a Park Avenue apartment filled with memorabilia of the frontier, and loved to tell her stories over again to each avid new listener.

Farrar and Rinehart approved the concept of the Rivers of America series, of which Skinner was named general editor in 1935. In 1937 the first volume appeared—*Kennebec: Cradle of Americans*, by Robert P. Tristram Coffin. The same year, Skinner made a cross-country speaking tour, promoting the series' two purposes: "to kindle imagination and to reveal American folk to one another." The First World War had, through rapid transportation developments, increased awareness of distant places and developed a public need to learn about the differing cultures of regions of America.

Six books of the series were published before Skinner died in 1939. The authors were chosen for their ability to reflect her desire that the books have literary style and popular appeal, as well as be supported by careful research. Skinner had wanted herself to write the volume on the Missouri, the nation's largest river, rich in the history of the fur trade and Indian culture. She died, however, before the work could be completed.

Biographical Sketch

Skinner is remembered by the Constance Lindsay Skinner award of the Women's National Book Association, originally presented annually and now biennially to a woman who has gone beyond the scope of her job to make an outstanding contribution to the world of books. (Carl Carmer presented the first award to Anne Carroll Moore in 1940.) Skinner had been an early member and a vice-president of the Women's National Book Association, and had had a part in the founding of its publication, *The Bookwoman*. In her introductory article, she wrote, "*The Bookwoman* originated in our hearts, not in our heads. Women are not content to keep their good things for themselves; they are never really sure that they have possessions until they share them." Constance Lindsay Skinner can rest assured that in her works she continues to share much of her great understanding of people and the land.

FOUR

Recollections of a Friend

HELEN HOKE WATTS

One of the happiest memories of my life in books—and possibly most fortunate and rewarding experience—was when Constance Lindsay Skinner “discovered” me, early in my first days as a children’s editor. This was in 1937 when I came to New York to inaugurate Henry Holt and Company’s children’s book department.

I owe Constance Skinner a huge debt. She was almost my only friend and confidant during my first two lonely, bone-hard-working years when I was trying to make my way in the so-complicated New York publishing world.

Having taught school for a few years after college, I had, for the past ten years, been in the book business in various roles: first, in the book department of Joseph Horne Company in Pittsburgh, Pa., then, as manager of

Recollections of a Friend

the new book department at Rosenbaum's department store (later to become the May Company). In the late 1920s I moved with my young son to Los Angeles to live through the depression with my mother and my sister's family. After several years as manager of Bullock's children's book department, I formed the Julia Ellsworth Ford Foundation for Children's Literature, and chose a West Coast publisher—Suttonhouse in Los Angeles—to publish the JEF Foundation books.

The JEF Foundation held a yearly contest for children's books, with a first advance of \$2,500 on the award title, which was a sizeable sum in those days. This contest in the first two years drew some very good submissions, of which we published fifteen in the first two years of my publishing career.

With several good books to our credit, I came to the conclusion that the foundation must work out of New York City—then, as now, the best location for American book publishing, and, through the help of the ubiquitous, wise, and helpful Frederic Melcher of *Publishers Weekly*, and the recommendations of Henry Holt and Company's West Coast salesman, I found myself, in the spring of 1937, Children's Book Editor at Holt.

During the course of my first month with Holt, it became necessary to select judges for the autumn JEF Foundation contest. At Frederic Melcher's suggestion, I wrote to Ellen Lewis Buell of *The New York Times*



Helen and John Hoke in 1937. A favorite picture of Constance Skinner's, she had it framed and hung on her wall, where it remained until her death.

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book department and May Lamberton Becker, then in charge of the review page on the *Herald Tribune*. They knew about our JEF Foundation books through their reviews of them and agreed to serve as judges. They further suggested that I write to Constance Lindsay Skinner to see if she also would be interested in participating as one of the judges.

I had never met Constance Lindsay Skinner, but had of course heard about her for many years and had hoped eventually to meet her. Because she was a name and person of eminence I decided not to telephone her, but to write to her instead. I addressed her as "Mrs." Skinner—her three names rather suggesting that she might be married. She wrote back to me in one of her always distinctive letters, on light brown paper with brown India ink—pages and pages of very singular script—that she was "Miss"—and "from inclination": she "had always been too busy," she said, "to marry"—which was easy to believe when I later learned of her busy past history, book output, and her present and future plans (she was then in the midst of her splendid Rivers of America series).

After correcting me about the use of the name, her letter went on to state that she generally did not believe in contests very much, but would, nevertheless, be glad to be of any assistance. She was sorry to be too engrossed in her editing to serve on my contest that year,

Constance Lindsay Skinner

but offered to read and report on the top three books which were selected. But in the meantime (knowing I was new to the pace of New York publishing and the prevailing cliquishness of the children's book world), she went on to say that she would like to give me some pointers on what it was wise for a near-beginner to do and on what it was wise to avoid. . . . Which she did—six pages of wise advice! (I kept this letter for years, rereading it many times over. Would I could find it now! But forty years of moving across countries and seas—and storage here and there—make that impossible.)

I immediately realized that Constance Skinner was someone with spirit, great vitality and tremendous integrity in her attitude toward the making of books—and toward life as well. That delighted me.

Only a few days later the telephone rang. Much to my amazement the voice at the other end said, "This is Constance Skinner. I want to meet you very soon." I said how happy I would be to meet her. She then went on: "You have been in this town less than two weeks, and I have rarely heard so much about anyone in this business in such a short time—I think you need some help!" She said she would call in a few days to set up an appointment when she had finished the galleys on which she was then working.

The next day I attended a luncheon meeting at the Waldorf comprised of children's book editors, librarians,

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and several reviewers of children's books. During the luncheon, I noted a striking woman sitting at a table nearby. She was dressed in a longer-than-usual dress of black lace and wore a large black lace hat rimmed with bright red poppies—and a long string of red beads to match. On anyone else, this combination would have seemed fairly startling, especially at midday; on this impressive, Spanish-looking woman (who always seemed taller than she actually was) it was somehow quite right. Although I had never heard anything about the appearance of Constance Skinner, I knew immediately that this was she.

When the meeting was over, we happened to meet by chance in front of the hotel, she waiting for a taxi, I for a bus. "You are Helen Hoke, aren't you?" she said. "Yes," I replied, "and you are Constance Lindsay Skinner." Before I could say more, she continued, "You are part Indian, are you not?" Considerably surprised, I said, "Yes, Joseph Brant (Thayendaneagea), Chief of the Mohawks, was my great, great grandfather. How did you *know* I was part Indian?" I asked in amazement. "Oh, I *always* know; I lived among the Indians of Canada and the upper northwest coast of the United States for so long." (Her father had been employed by the Hudson Bay Company, so she remained forever interested in Indians.)

Just then a taxi pulled up and Constance invited me to

ride along with her. I commented on what a luxury it seemed to take a taxi instead of a bus (since I did not expect to be able to afford any such mad expenditure for years). I was enchanted with her quick and amusing explanation of this indulgence: "Oh, *that's* something I should explain to you for your future guidance (as soon as you can afford taxis at all): *Never fuss with a bus!* If you take a taxi you avoid having to stand waiting, narrowly being missed by passing cars, fiddling around for the right change, etc. . . . In a taxi, you can *think* about where you are going and what you need to have ready to say when you get there—especially if it's a business meeting. . . . I write one extra book or article a year in order not to feel guilty about using taxis all the time." (Alas, Constance's philosophy about taxi-cabs has cost me a small fortune in the years that have followed!)

Late the following day, Constance called to invite me to tea at her apartment in the big old brownstone building on Park Avenue in which she had lived for several years. I remarked on how elegant it was to live on Park Avenue. She said she couldn't afford it, of course, were it not for a benevolent friend who was very sympathetic to literary and artistic people and who had loaned several of them apartments during difficult times in their careers. She passed it off very quickly and I never knew who the benevolent friend was.

On this day, after settling me into a huge old walnut

Recollections of a Friend

wing chair in her enormous, dark living room, filled with intriguing paintings and articles, she began, "I have thought a great deal about you since our meeting yesterday, and I have decided to help you."

"Oh, Miss Skinner—I am thrilled, as I am sure you know—but *why* do you want to help me?" I stammered. "You are so busy."

"For several very good reasons," she replied. "First, when I was getting my own start, I was in much the same situation as you: I was on my own, in a hard job, desperately lonely, in a city where I had no friends (and no time to make friends)—and with an ailing dependent—my mother—just as you have your young son to raise. . . . Many times, I did not know how I would manage the rent and, sometimes, where even our next meal was coming from.

"My family were nearly all dead, dispersed, or busy with their own troubles. I had no one to help me or to give me advice," she went on. "You are in a hard position here and have much to learn. I can feel your zeal, your genuine desire, your flair and your original way of thinking. . . . I am going to see that you meet some people who can help you—and will *want* to—as you are in a unique position to start something fresh and original. I shall keep in touch with you, see you as often as I can, and drop you a note whenever I hear of something you should know."

Lucky me! This remarkable woman had, in effect,

decided to make me her protégé and be a supportive friend in this lonely new job.

And so she was, for two hard-working, valuable years.

That first year we met as often as our hectic schedules would allow. She either saw me briefly at her home for tea, where others now seldom came during this busiest period of her life, or she would telephone me in the evenings when I got home from work, when both our schedules were too full to indulge in meetings.

Soon the telephone talks came to be a nightly occasion: they usually began with Constance having me give her a run-down of my day (parts of which I would often be surprised to find she already knew about!), then Constance would help me to understand the nature and intricacies of the publishing business. Knowing much about what was happening in the book world, she would often have heard of some slightly unwise remark I had made or of some naive opinion I had been foolish enough to express, for which she might scold me.

That second, busiest year, Constance would often talk to me evenings on the phone for half an hour then say, "I'll hang up now . . . even though we haven't finished . . . then you call me right back." (Because she would become cautious about her phone bill!)

She told me early on about the *Rivers of America*

Recollections of a Friend

series, and I recognized what a great thing it could be, how devoted to it she was, and how long-lived she felt it would be, and I was awed by the amount of work she had to do regarding it.

Constance never wasted time talking about things she could send me to read. She used to send scripts, books, a helpful quote here or there, suggestions of other things I should read. Once when I was discouraged about some now long-forgotten slight, negligence or near-calamity, she soothed me by sending me some lines from Byron's wonderful *Childe Harold* and told me to read it every morning. For years I read it over and over and knew it by heart. But our phone calls, especially the more intense ones, were always about things that could not be conveyed with a book or a quote or a meaningful poem. They were one-to-one communications direct from friend to friend, from spirit to spirit.

Constance gave me enormous courage. She kept saying, "Don't let people change you. You keep right on with your aims and work very hard. Do, however, accommodate yourself to the way people *are*, enough to get around, to get by. . . . But don't tell everybody everything you're doing, just go ahead and *do* it, and build." I think if she talked of "integrity" and "keeping to your true aims" once, she must have done it dozens of times. She kept me striving for the highest I could do

and be. I don't think she could have stood it if she had heard that I had done something really foolish. She couldn't abide fools or people who talked idly or didn't really do their work thoroughly. She admired professionals. She valued integrity, drive and ambition—especially ambition; and worthwhile things were the most important of all. Life was too short, she kept emphasizing, for anything else.

Constance never talked with me of her later schooling. She had never had the opportunity to go to college, I believe. There were many things in her past that she never cared to talk about, or perhaps was bored with, and I somehow felt, almost from the first, that perhaps she felt her time was short. Although she never spoke of illness, looking back I realize that she also never spoke of the future or of future plans. She felt pushed, I know. She could hardly wait to see the *Rivers of America* books all in print. I am certain that Constance felt that this would be her crowning achievement.

Constance Skinner well enjoyed the things she had won, but she was a terrific overachiever (as am I—partly her fault!). At almost everything she had tackled, she had done well. (I don't think she would have told me about anything she *hadn't* done well!) She struck awe into people, and I think they may have been at first put off by her drive, appearance and presence. They very

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quickly were put at ease by her charming nature and wonderful, wry sense of humor. But she also could puncture highly lauded authority with her sweetly caustic, slightly wicked opinions.

When Constance was talking to someone in person, she was totally *with* that person. Her mind wasn't stirring to other things, and she always looked you in the eye—yes, very much so! She had piercing, evaluating eyes—you didn't look the other way. And if she were talking to you, you listened. Her presence was enormous.

I imagine I had the benefit of the true essence of her companionship at that time so close to the end, when she was not seeing many people. I think our times together were fairly intense, as she then was so busy “using my business head,” as she called it, to quickly sign, seal and settle that engrossing series about the rivers. She would sometimes tire of the project (but only temporarily—she lived for it!). I often wonder, this long time after—exactly forty years—if she *knew* how frail she was becoming, and if *time* was worrying her. She rarely complained about anything physical and often reminded me to “stay healthy” and, above all, “never complain about feeling bad—no one is interested.”

The week she died, she said in one of her nightly phone calls, “I don't know if I can talk to you as often as

usual." She wouldn't be able to call me every night, she explained, as she usually did. "I'm going to be very busy, so don't want to be disturbed, but I'll call you whenever I can."

But she did call the very next night and said, "Look, I can't talk long tonight, but I wanted to have a word with you because I know you saw so-and-so at lunch—tell me what happened."

"You sound awfully tired," I replied. "Let me take you out for a quick dinner. Can't you take the evening off?"

"No, I couldn't do that," she said firmly, "and don't call back. When we finish talking tonight, I'm going to take the telephone off the hook in case someone phones, for I'm going to finish this tonight if it is the last thing I do!"

She was found the next morning—pen on the last galley—exactly on the dot where she had written "The End." I had been the last person to speak with her.

And I have missed her all these years.

FIVE

Constance Lindsay Skinner Award Winners

Established in 1940 to honor Constance Lindsay Skinner, founder of the Rivers of America series and active member of the Women's National Book Association, the award consists of a citation presented to a living American woman who (1) derives a part or all of her income from books and allied arts and (2) has done meritorious work in the world of books beyond the duties or responsibilities of her profession or occupation. Formerly presented annually, the award is now bestowed biennially in even-numbered years.

Each chapter of the WNBA submits the name of a nominee, and a jury appointed by the president selects three names to appear on the ballot. All active and *corresponding members of the Association* are eligible to vote.

Constance Lindsay Skinner

The award is presented at a ceremony, whose time and place are determined by the president and the CLS committee, in consultation with the recipient.

—1940—

ANNE CARROLL MOORE

First winner of the CLS Award. In 1906 she left Pratt Institute and crossed the bridge from Brooklyn to take charge of children's reading in New York. She affected the practice of librarianship in a hundred ways. Two generations of publishers have attested to the leadership and inspiration which she supplied to a growing profession.

—1941—

BLAIR NILES

In appreciation of her many fine books and for her work in furthering friendship and understanding between the Americas—North, South and Central. She is the founder of the Women Geographers' Society.

—1942—

IRITA VAN DOREN

Chosen because of her work for books. She has achieved outstanding success in dramatizing books for the masses, both in her weekly book supplement and as chairman of the Book and Author Luncheons held under the joint sponsorship of the Herald Tribune and the American Booksellers' Association.

Constance Lindsay Skinner Award Winners

—1943—

MARY GRAHAM BONNER

Author widely known for the quality of her children's books. Her twenty-fifth book, Canada and Her Story, is particularly important in this country as it is a history of Canada for American children.

—1944—

MILDRED C. SMITH

In recognition of more than twenty years of service to the book trades, and as an expression of gratitude for the help and encouragement which she has given to bookwomen throughout the United States, above and beyond her duties as co-editor of Publishers Weekly.

—1945—

LILLIAN SMITH

For many years she has talked, worked and written for her beloved South. She has torn the veil of silence from "forbidden" subjects; she has striven to overcome narrow provincialisms of thought and feeling; she has taught the brotherhood of man. Distinguished author of Strange Fruit.

—1946—

AMY LOVEMAN

New York Post, Saturday Review of Literature, Book-of-the-Month Club. She has given so much to so many. She has stood steadfastly for what she believed to be for the good of the book world, and has given unstintingly of her time and energy to that end.

Constance Lindsay Skinner

— 1947 —

EMILY P. STREET

Secretary of William Morrow & Company and Director of Sales and Advertising. No one in the book trade who has received a "Polly Street letter" will ever forget it. It goes to the recipient with the sincere personal touch that characterizes everything she does . . . an all-seeing eye and an understanding heart.

— 1948 —

MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Lecturer, editor, author. Her long and distinguished association with publishing on both sides of the Atlantic began in 1915 when she created and managed a book department for the New York Evening Post from which evolved "The Reader's Guide" in the New York Herald Tribune.

— 1949 —

LUCILE PANNELL

A High School Librarian in Chicago when this was a relatively new field. Here she did pioneer work with young people who were hungry for good books. As manager of the juvenile book department of Carson Pirie Scott, The Hobby Horse Bookshop, she made an enviable name. One of the six book women who started the Chicago Chapter of WNBA. Active in the work of the Chicago Children's Reading Round Table.

— 1950 —

MAY MASSEE

Director of Doubleday's new department, Books for Children, 1923-1933. Director of the Junior Book Department at The

Constance Lindsay Skinner Award Winners

Viking Press from 1933 until she retired. The books she has published have given delight to countless children and become prized volumes in homes and libraries. For her creative contribution to book design she was given the AIGA Medal.

—1951—

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

Novelist, translator, educator, critic. Retired after twenty-five years as one of the members of the original panel of judges for the Book-of-the-Month Club. Guest of honor at the WNBA Summer Outing 1952.

—1952—

MARGARET C. SCOGGIN

Inspired link between books and young people. Library training in London, Columbia and Teachers College. No opportunity to serve the reading needs of young people escaped her attention; no project she served failed to gain from her sparkling enthusiasm. Superintendent of Work with Young People at the New York Public Library.

—1953—

LILIAN GURNEY

Her knowledge of books and her insight into the problems of book distribution grew with her years at Gimbel's and The American News Company. Her patience and the wisdom and soundness of her advice have had a profound influence on all who have had the privilege of working with her. A National President of the WNBA.

Constance Lindsay Skinner

—1954—

ELIZABETH GRAY VINING

Tutor to the Crown Prince of Japan. Japanese Ambassador Sawardo spoke of his people's deep appreciation of her contribution to Japan. Her book opened doors for the Crown Prince and the world and made the Royal Family more accessible to the Japanese people.

—1955—

FANNY BUTCHER

Literary Editor of the Chicago Tribune. Among the first to perceive the greatness of and give encouragement to Willa Cather, Carl Sandburg, Sinclair Lewis, and Ernest Hemingway. Her lifelong dedication to books is evidenced in her reviews and her sparkling weekly column, "The Literary Spotlight."

BERTHA E. MAHONY MILLER

She brought a freshness of spirit to old Boylston Street when she opened her story-telling Bookshop for Boys and Girls. Conceived and introduced the first bookmobile. In 1924 she launched The Horn Book, beloved guide and counselor to all who serve the reading interests of children, a magazine without parallel or precedent.

—1956—

MARY ELLEN CHASE

Professor of English Literature at Smith College. She has developed the love of books among her students and as a novelist has won a large and devoted public. She wrote the delightful introduction to WNBA's publication, Americana, As Taught to the Tune of a Hickory Stick.

Constance Lindsay Skinner Award Winners

—1957—

ANNE J. RICHTER

From her vantage point in Frederic Melcher's office at the R. R. Bowker Company, she became hostess and friend to many foreign book trade emissaries. Her thorough understanding of the industry and her skill in interpreting its various elements has helped to effect a more closely knit and cooperative industry. First National President of the WNBA.

—1958—

EDITH HAMILTON

*Scholar, educator, author. At age sixty-three she wrote *The Greek Way* and rose to a height few women attain. When she spoke in the amphitheatre under the Acropolis in Athens, she was decorated by King Paul of Greece who made her an honorary citizen of that ancient city.*

—1959—

MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

Teacher at Western Reserve University, a pioneer in the use of children's books in the elementary grades; author of anthologies and textbooks; and a story-teller of renown. Her influence has been widespread in keeping high the standards of reading for children and in making these standards known to parents, librarians, teachers, and booksellers.

MARCHETTE CHUTE

She has greatly enhanced the image of the writer as an active influence in American life and has made a unique contribution to our national culture. As a member of the National Book Committee, she has been a motivating force in its work for a better-read and better-informed America.

Constance Lindsay Skinner

—1960—

PEARL BUCK

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1934 for The Good Earth; in 1938 the Nobel Prize in literature. "... global responsibility is up to women; the crucial problems of today [are] to keep the worldwide family in good health and sanity; give all children the opportunity for education; provide for the aged and the handicapped." As Mrs. Richard J. Walsh she served as an Advisory Editor at The John Day Company, publishers.

—1961—

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

"I wish that we could cultivate among young people an appreciation of beautiful printing and binding . . . and of everything that goes into the making of a fine book. . . . Reading is one of the best ways in which young people can stretch their horizons." For several years a judge for the Junior Literary Guild.

—1962—

CATHERINE DRINKER BOWEN

Outstanding author intensely interested in libraries; widely acclaimed as historian and biographer. Two of her best known books, Yankee from Olympus and John Adams and the American Revolution. She was a member of the Board of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

—1963—

RACHEL CARSON

Author of The Sea Around Us and Silent Spring. Were the gift of poetic insight into science her only contribution, it would still be

The Women's National Book Association

IS HONORED TO PRESENT

The Constance Lindsay Skinner Award for 1961

TO

Eleanor Roosevelt

FOR HER CONTINUING, life-long efforts to encourage reading and to establish books as an integral part of everyday life for all Americans. Her remarkable success in this endeavor has been achieved by her affirmation in her autobiographical writings of the importance of books in her life since childhood; By her keen interest in wide distribution of good books to children as evidenced by her long association with the Junior Literary Guild; By her interpretation of the United Nations and its purposes to young people, through her books; By including references to books and reading in her widely read newspaper and magazine columns; By fully using the printed word as a means of communicating with a vast public; By her willingness to take part in various book-oriented projects including programs of our Association. To all that she has done out of her personal conviction concerning the importance of reading, she has brought her unequalled prestige as an American public figure throughout the world.

Arlene Hursey
PRESIDENT

*Sample Constance Lindsay Skinner Award citation,
awarded to Eleanor Roosevelt for 1961.*

Constance Lindsay Skinner

unique in the present day. . . . She has challenged the conscience of man . . . has aroused people to an appreciation of the beauty of the world around them . . . and warned them of the danger of losing it.

—1964—

POLLY GOODWIN

Children's Editor of the Chicago Tribune's "Books Today." "For creative leadership in bringing together children and the limitless world of books. In an era of opportunism and changing values she has held an unwavering faith that only the best is good enough for children."

—1965—

VIRGINIA H. MATHEWS

From enthusiastic seller of books at Brentano's to Deputy Director of the National Library Week Program and Director of Reading Development Services for the Association of American Publishers to editor, publisher, author of library tools. Her great gift is the ability to instill in others her feeling of the importance of good reading and her enthusiasm for good books. A National President of the WNBA.

—1966—

BLANCHE W. KNOPF

Distinguished president of the firm of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., which her husband and she founded a half century ago. ". . . most remarkable woman in the history of publishing." The Award was posthumously accepted by Alfred A. Knopf.

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—1967—

MILDRED L. BATCHELDER

University lecturer, and head of the American Library Association's office for library service to children and young people. Her appreciation of the human potential and her skill in giving substance to her vision have made her an outstandingly versatile figure in the realm of books.

—1968—

RUTH HILL VIGUERS

Librarian and teacher, editor, lecturer and author, she brought children and books together in many parts of the world. Through her skill as a storyteller she has shared her enthusiasm for books. Also served as editor of The Horn Book.

—1969—

VICTORIA S. JOHNSON

Gifted in library promotion for reference book publishing. With many friends in the book and library world, Vicki served the WNBA in various ways, as editor of The Bookwoman, president of the Chicago Chapter, National Membership Chairman and National President. During her term of office several new chapters were organized, including Detroit, Grand Rapids and San Francisco.

—1970—

CHARLEMAE HILL ROLLINS

Librarian, teacher, author and editor she strove to present a true and dignified portrayal of black life in literature. She had an enduring influence upon the reading tastes of the young readers whom she served and gave important encouragement to young black authors.

Constance Lindsay Skinner

—1971—

AUGUSTA BAKER

Librarian, folklorist, storyteller, anthologist and administrator of children's work at the New York Public Library, she has been an emissary from the world of the imagination to children everywhere—black and white, rich and poor.

—1972—

URSULA NORDSTROM

Publisher of Harper Junior Books and vice-president of Harper and Row, the list of authors whose books she has edited is most distinguished. Many dealt with subjects representing a breakthrough in the publishing of children's books due to her open mind, her social conscience, a rejection of stereotypes and her keen sense of a child's interest.

—1973—

MARY VIRGINIA GAVER

Librarian, educator, researcher, writer and publisher, she has worked with constant dedication to the highest professional standards. An exceptional administrator, she has served as president of the American Library Association and many other organizations, including the WNBA. Her genius and enthusiasm, her knowledgeable concern for others, and her ability to analyze and inspire have characterized her service to public and private causes.

—1975—

MARGARET K. McELDERRY

Trained as a librarian, she worked at the New York Public Library with Anne Carroll Moore and Frances Clark Sayers. After overseas

Constance Lindsay Skinner Award Winners

service with the Office of War Information, she became the head of the Children's Book Department of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, later moving to Atheneum Publishers, where she continued to issue important juvenile titles under her own imprint.

—1976—

FRANCES NEEL CHENEY

Professor Emerita of the George Peabody Library School in Nashville, Tennessee, she has served the profession in many ways—as a reviewer of reference books, as an officer in the American Library Association, as president of the Bibliographical Society of America and of other library-oriented organizations. She has also been a visiting professor in Tokyo.

HELEN HONIG MEYER

President of Dell Publishing Company at the time of the award, she was the only woman president of a major publishing house. She has been a director of the Association of American Publishers and is now a consultant with Doubleday and Company.

BARBARA RINGER

Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress, she has made a major contribution to the book trade and librarianship through her advocacy of the new copyright legislation protecting the rights of authors and users, for her stand on anti-discrimination in employment, and for her commitment to individual freedom.

—1978—

MARY STAHLMAN DOUGLAS

Book page editor of the Nashville Banner for some four decades, she created a well-informed reading audience in Middle Tennessee

Constance Lindsay Skinner

through her interest in the National Book Awards, Children's Book Week, and National Library Week and through her reviews of some 100,000 books.

—1980—

ANNE PELLOWSKI

Director-Librarian of the Information Center on Children's Cultures at the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, accomplished linguist, author of several books reflecting the role of juvenile literature around the world, Anne has been active in the international world of children's books since the beginning of her career. It is most appropriate that her CLS Award follows upon the International Year of the Child.

SIX

Checklist of Works

MARILYN NORSTEDT

This is a preliminary checklist of works written by Constance Lindsay Skinner and of the Rivers of America series which she conceived and inaugurated. Although errors and omissions are to be expected in this compilation, it is hoped that the checklist will prove useful to Skinner scholars and collectors.

The works written by Skinner, which form the first part of the checklist, are listed in chronological order; within each year, books appear before minor works. The books in the Rivers of America series, the second part of the checklist, are arranged alphabetically by author. An index to titles and illustrators mentioned in the checklist is at the end.

WORKS BY
CONSTANCE LINDSAY SKINNER

"Song of the Super-woman" [poem], *Munsey's Magazine* 49 (Sept. 1913): 943.

"Lover's Philosophy" [poem], *Munsey's Magazine* 50 (Nov. 1913): 306.

Builder of Men [Mentioned in *Oxford Companion to American Literature* as published in Germany in 1913; further information unavailable.]

"Songs of the Coast-dwellers" [poems], *Poetry* 5 (Oct. 1914): 1-19.

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