

Rayzor Hall R. 207  
306 S. Locust  
Denton, Texas 76201  
April 15, 1966

Miss Alice Mary Norton  
1829 Mannering Road  
Cleveland 12, Ohio

Dear Miss Norton:

For the past seven or so years I have been a fan of yours. I have tried to read all of your books that I came in contact with. I have enjoyed all of them. Permit me to introduce myself and give you the chief reason for this letter. Through the biographical material that I have found telling about your life and career as both a librarian and a writer, I came to want to know more about one of my favorite authors.

I am a graduate student working on my Master of Library Science degree at Texas Woman's University. I hope to graduate this coming August. In order to fulfill the degree requirements for my degree I must write what is known as a professional paper. I chose to do a combination biography, bibliography, and a discussion of your books.

To put it simply I would appreciate any information that you might wish to give me on your life. I would also appreciate any thoughts that you have on both your career as a librarian and a writer. I realize that you must do a great deal of research before you write a book especially your historical novels. I have observed that in your earlier written books there were no major female characters but that in your later books such as Year of the Unicorn and Ordeal in Otherwhere there have been. Have you done this to attract more girls to your books? This is the reason that I had thought of. In order not to take any more of your valuable time I will close this letter.

Sincerely yours,

*Sharon Wilbur*

Sharon Wilbur

Andre Norton  
1829 Mannering Rd.  
Cleveland, Ohio 44112

April 20, 1966

Dear Miss Wilbur:

~~I am indeed flattered and you deem my work suitable for your  
series and I will try to help you in whatever assistance you  
want. This is a good thing to do since for a short space of time between  
books.~~

I did not start intending to be a writer at all, but in high school I was on the staff of the school paper and in addition a member of a very keen creative writing class (from that class of about fifteen, five of us did become professional writers in the end). When I entered college I had planned to become a history teacher--since history and archaeology were my major interests. Then the depression intervened and I was forced to find a job, which I did in the library. For some years I was an assistant in the children's department, then I managed a bookshop, and finally went into war work in Washington--then to the Congressional Library--and then back to children's department here in Cleveland once again. In 1950 my health forced my retirement from the library and since then I have been free lancing in fiction writing--since I am more or less confined to my home.

Yes, I do a great deal of research for each book--not only just the historical ones. For an s-f title I read archaeology, natural history, folklore, anthropology, travel, native religions etc. Since incidents and customs from some minor primitive race on this world can be transposed to an alien people with a few small changes.

Ideas come from such books. CONQUEST BY MAN by Paul Herrmann sent me off to write TIME TRADERS because I became so fascinated with the Bronze Age traders--Celtic Magic and lore began the Witch World stories and so it goes.

I used only male characters in my first books because they were intended only for teen age boys and the feeling was that they did not care for important female characters. In fact the publisher was dubious about ORDEAL IN OTHERWHEDE--but letters from readers proved that more and more girls are now reading s-f, and that the boys did not resent the feminine introductions.

Of course, the Witch World tales are for adult readers and not for the teen age, so one can introduce subject matter which is a little more frank and realistic.

As to why I started to use feminine characters--I was horrified to be told that there were questions raised by some readers about the tendency towards homo-beliefs when the books were so tightly masculine. I had never thought that this could be suggested and it was a shock--making me try to study each new book to see if anything could possibly be read into it by any reader who could twist ideas. This is, of course, a frank answer to you and not to be used for quotation nor publication, I think you will understand why.

Year of the Unicorn by the way, has had an unusually reception, All the women and girl readers who have mentioned it to me have liked it very much indeed--but some of the masculine readers were apparently angered or irked by the heroine--the first of my books to ever have such a divided reception.

I trust this information will be of some assistance to you. If you have any other questions, I shall try to answer them to the best of my ability.

Sincerely  
Andre Norton

Andre Norton  
1829 Mannering Rd.  
Cleveland, Ohio 44112

May 1, 1966

Dear Miss Weidner  
Thank you very much for letting me see this biographical material-- there were a few minor errors which I corrected. I would prefer your not mentioning my birthdate, since this is for business purposes.

The book I wrote first which was rewritten later to become the second one I had published was RALESTONE LUCK.

I took the trip to the West Indies in the late 30s. And the material gathered on that trip I also used in SEA SEIGE--as the island in that book is Inagua which I visited on that trip.

Island of the Lost was the English version of SWORD IN SHEATH, and under that title it was printed in two editions over there, one hardcover, one paperback. MURDER FOR SALE was an adult mystery--I did the plotting and Grace Hogarth the writing. Ralestone Luck was a mystery adventure laid in the bayou country of Louisiana--intended for teen age readers, and, as you can see by the above, it was the first book I wrote. Though it was revised again before publication.

I hope this will be of service to you.

Sincerely,

Andre Norton

Miss Norton, a green-eyed, brunette, is five feet seven inches tall. Interested in many activities she is a member of the Presbyterian church and belongs to the Republican party, the Women's National Book Association, and Theta Sigma Phi. Needlework of all kind, cooking, and an interest in old dolls and antiques are among her avocations. She enjoys reading such authors as Anthony Trollope, Angela Thirkell, Josephine Fay, Georgette Heyer, and Jane Austen and about the Victorian period.

*others have moved further west than Ohio*

Alice Mary Norton, better known to her many readers as Andre Norton and henceforth referred to in this paper as Andre Norton, was born in Cleveland, Ohio on February 17, 1912 to Adalbert and Daisy Bertha Stemm Norton. Her father's family came to America from England in 1634. During the early 1800's the Nortons settled permanently in Ohio. On her mother's side there is a blending of nationalities of Scotch, English, Pennsylvania Dutch, Irish, and American Indian. Her mother's family settled in Ohio on bounty land that had been given them for service during the American revolution. Miss Andre Norton had one sister.

While attending Collinwood High School in Cleveland Miss Norton worked on the staff of the Collinwood Spotlight, the school's newspaper. She also wrote short adventure stories for the school's literary magazine which was published each semester. She became an active member of the Quill and Scroll, honorary society of high school journalists. While in high school she also served as president for the honor society of girls. One of Miss Norton's most interesting classes was the one taught by Miss Sylvia Cockran. In talking about that class Miss Norton has said that she was "a member of a very keen creative writing class (from that class of about fifteen, five of us did become professional writers in the end)." During her high school years Miss Norton was a winner of the English trophy. After graduation from high school in 1930 Miss Norton attended Western Reserve University in Cleveland. Her two major interests in college were history and archeology. She had planned to become a history teacher. She also took several writing courses. This interest in history and archeology has been reflected in many of her books.

After ~~two~~ <sup>one</sup> years of college however the depression hit and Miss Norton was unable to continue. Thus in 1932 she became assistant to the librarian in the children's department of the Cleveland Public Library. It was in 1934 that her first published book appeared. It was The Prince Commands, a Graustarkian romance. After several years at the library she left there to become manager of a bookstore. In 1938 her second book, Ralestone Luck, a ~~historical~~ <sup>magical</sup> novel, was published. During World War II she worked as a special librarian for a citizenship project in Washington, D. C. Follow The Drum, a novel set in colonial Maryland, appeared in 1942. She also worked for a time at the Library of Congress. After the war she again went to work in the children's department of the Cleveland Public Library.

During World War II Miss Norton became acquainted with the work being done by the Cleveland Press' World Friends Club.

Through friendship with some of its members she was given permission to read letters that had been received from people in the Netherlands. From these letters came the idea for three of her novels. These were The Sword Is Drawn, Sword In Sheath, and At Swords' Points. For her sympathetic portrayal of the Dutch people during the war in Sword Is Drawn, the Netherlands government awarded her a citation and a plaque in 1946. It was also a Junior Literary Guild selection the year that it was published. Second place in the Ohioana Library Juvenile Award contest was given to Sword In Sheath in 1949.

One year the author was a passenger on a Dutch freighter which stopped at some of the smaller islands of the West Indies. Out of this trip and several years of reading and research about West Indian colonial life during the reign of the Stuarts and about pirates came the story of Scarface which was published in 1949.

Two of her books, Rogue Reynard and Huon of the Horn, were the result of a series of legends that Miss Norton had translated and adapted for story hours at several of the branches of the Cleveland Public Library. After proving popular with her audiences, the two groups of legends were published.

Because of poor health Miss Norton retired from the library in 1950. As a result of being limited to home she has gone into full time free lance writing. During the years 1950 to 1958 she served as editor for the Gnome Press teenage science fiction department. Her first venture into writing science fiction was Star Man's Son published in 1952. In 1963 she was given the Headliner Award from Theta Sigma Phi.

Although the majority of Miss Norton's output have been in the area of book length material, she has also been a contributor to magazines among which have been Fantasy and Science Fiction and Fantastic Universe. Her short story, "Mousetrap", which appeared in Fantasy and Science Fiction was reprinted in Best Science Fiction of 1955.

More than fifteen of her books have appeared in foreign editions. Translated into German, Italian, and Spanish have been several of the Star books and one of the Solar Queen group. Other editions of her work have appeared in Danish and Dutch translations and British editions. Braille editions have also been published.

Other awards - Invisible little man - given for  
general service in S-F - 1963

Boys Club of America citation for Night of Masks -  
1965

Translated - Arabic, Dutch, Danish, Russian,  
French.

1400 N. Elm Apt. 2  
Denton, Texas 76201  
June 9, 1966

Miss Andre Norton  
1829 Mannering Road  
Cleveland, Ohio 44112

Dear Miss Norton,

Now that I have completed the spring semester of school and passed my examinations and am reenrolled in school for the summer, I can resume work on my professional paper. Thank you for all of your help so far.

Throughout the majority of your books I have found what seems to be a trend. This is the close cooperation between your heroes and heroines and intelligent or semi-intelligent animals. Within your science fiction this has taken the form of certain animals being deliberately bred, mutated, and developed to increase their intelligence. Perhaps you could further explain this. Also I have gained the feeling that you must love animals. Do you have any pets?

I have been trying to work out a chronological framework within which to place your science fiction. The earliest date is 1970 for Sea Siege. The Time Traders and the three books within that series seem to take place between 1975 and 1980. I then have a jump to 2250 A.D. for Star Man's Son. If The Stars Are Ours is set in 2500 A.D., this would place Star Born in about 3000 A.D. These two dates seem to far in the future. From 3000 A.D. the next date appears to be 3956 A.D. for the action in Star Guard. The final date given in any of your books is 8054 A.D. for the action in Star Rangers. Are the majority of your books set between 3956 and 8054 or is my chronology off? When you were writing your s.f. did you work within a mentally established time span or is there no time relationship between your books at all?

I do not know exactly how to ask my next question. Many of your books (s.f.) seem to be based on the assumption of the collapse of modern civilization on earth because of the complete or partial destruction of civilization due to atomic warfare. This can be seen in Star Man's Son and The Stars Are Ours. In The Beast Master Earth has been completely destroyed. If you do not mind me asking you this, could you explain your philosophy on this seeming destruction of earth in many of your books?

One thing that has stirred my curiosity and led me on to your next book is "Those Others", the "Forerunners" or "the unknown space travelers". Traces and remains of this extinct civilization appear on such planets as Korwar, Arzor, Terra, and

Mimir. Is this all the same race which had interstellar travel?  
Is this related to your belief that history repeats itself?

~~these observations and questions from reading all of your s. f.~~  
The middle part of my paper is to be based upon what I hope will  
be an intelligent and thorough analysis of just your science  
fiction novels.

Sincerely yours,

Sharon Wilbur

Andre Norton  
1829 Mannering Road  
Cleveland, Ohio 44112

June 13, 1966

Dear Miss Wilbur:

I am very much interested in empathy between man and animal--of course, this is becoming a matter of research and study now--I have just ordered a new English publication concerning actual cases wherein this had been proven to exist--and the Lilly research on dolphins has taught us that we are just beginning to realize that there are vast, undiscovered areas of knowledge in this field. I suppose this interest was triggered for me by the work of Eric Frank Russell, who writes so very well of future combinations of man and animal in space exploration. I do have a cat--and I am very interested in conservation, wildlife refuges and the like.

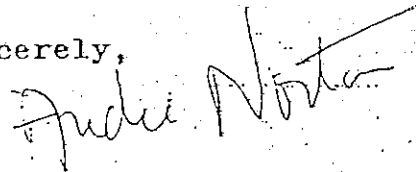
There is only a chronological framework for the books with "Star" in the title--they are supposed to present a future history at various periods from the rise of space travel to its fall. But the rest of the books are not meant to fit into any definite order--merely being probable adventures in different probable futures.

World chaos is an idea which fascinates me --the downfall of the present creaky and lopsided civilization in which material gains have outstripped certain other needful values. But I want always to suggest that in each downfall there is the seed of a new rise--I do not accept the gloom of the English writers who see only an end--period.

I do believe that we are certainly not the only civilization which has reached for space and if we do ever voyage galactically we shall either come against alien stellar civilizations or the remnants of them. History does repeat itself--not to every detail, but in the rise and fall of civilizations, as we know of the happening on this world--it could well be so in space. And I can not imagine any thrill greater than to explore alien ruins on another planet with all the guessing and speculation such a feat would mean for those lucky enough to do so.

I hope that this answers your questions---

Sincerely,





370 Westview Terrace

Arlington, TX 76013

trekkerandtribbles@yahoo.com

23 January 2015

Dear Sue,

Many years ago I believe that I promised you a copy of my Master's paper for my M.L.S. degree that I did on Andre. I finally found a copy of it. When you read it, keep in mind that I did it in 1966 which also was many years ago. Remember the days before computers? Well I do. I paid a professional typist to type it for me. Add it to the information that you have on Andre.

Another tidbit on me. My full legal name is Sharon Faye Wilbur. Until 1981 I was using Sharon. I switched to using my middle name as it was easier for people to understand.

Yes, you may post my Master's paper on Andre Norton on the estate website. As long as I am given credit, I will be satisfied.

I am sorry it took so long for me to mail it back to your correct address.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Faye Wilbur". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Faye Wilbur