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<tr>
<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th>[Letters : Barrett H. Clark to Carl Van Vechten]</th>
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<td><strong>Call Number</strong></td>
<td>JWJ MSS 9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Creator</strong></td>
<td>Clark, Barrett H. (Barrett Harper), 1890-1953</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Published/Created Date</strong></td>
<td>1931 January 15-22</td>
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<td><strong>Collection Title</strong></td>
<td>Zora Neale Hurston Collection</td>
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Mr. Carl Van Vechten,
150 West 55th St.,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Van Vechten:

As play-reader for The Theatre Guild I read the script of Zora Hurston's MULEBONE and found it sufficiently fresh and interesting to recommend further readings by other Guild staff members. Today, however, it has come back to me and is ready for returning to you.

Today Mrs. Jelliffe, director of a good non-professional playhouse in Cleveland was in the office (here) and I thought this play might interest her, so I explained about the play and she asked me to try to get it for her.

As Mrs. Jelliffe was going back to Cleveland tonight, I took the liberty of giving her the script, but told her I could not authorize its production until I heard from the owners.

Mrs. Jelliffe would give probably four performances and possibly more, and pay on an average of $15 a performance. If the author cares to have her play tried out in this way would you be good enough to let me know at the earliest possible moment?

The royalty department of this office informs me they would be glad to handle this matter on the usual 20% amateur commission basis.

Sincerely yours,

Barrett H. Clark.
1931 January 15: I. [1v]

[Content of the document is not legible due to the image quality.]

Samuel French
New York, January 15, 1931

[Content of the document is not legible due to the image quality.]

Dear Mr. Ven Vesper:

An play-designer for the Theatre Guild, I have

the privilege of seeing pictures of your work and of

writing to you about my experience in the theatre.

I hope in a few days to be able to send you a copy of

your portfolio. In the meantime I am sending you this letter to

say how much I appreciate the opportunity of working with

you.

I have a letter from Mr. Metzler, one of the leading

architects of our profession, who has written me in the following

words: "I have been looking over your portfolio and I am

happy to say that I think it is one of the best I have seen."

Yours truly,

[Signature]
Mr. Carl Van Vechten,
150 West 55th St.,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Van Vechten:

Thank you for your note of January 20th. The enclosed carbon will, I think, explain just what I have done in connection with MULESBOKE.

The moment [illegible] I heard that another author besides Miss Hurston claimed some part in the writing, I wired Mrs. Jelliiffe to return the manuscript to me. When it comes I will be glad to return it to Miss Hurston direct.

It is unfortunate that the author (or authors?) is (or are) determined to fight out their property rights by law, because of course the manuscript will be tied up for a long time. I am sorry because I think the play might have some chance of production.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

BHC/jw
January 21, 1931.

Mr. Langston Hughes,
4600 Carnegie Ave.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Hughes:

That matter of the manuscript of MULEBONE is assuming rather grandeur proportions. I am now in touch with Mrs. Jelliffe, Miss Hurston, Mr. Van Vechten and yourself. Mr. Van Vechten submitted the play to the Theatre Guild and as a reader for the Guild I read it. Thinking that Mrs. Jelliffe might be interested I sent her the script unofficially and wrote Mr. Van Vechten at once for authorization or some word I might send on to Mrs. Jelliffe. Then Mrs. Jelliffe informed me of the claim you made regarding authorship and Miss Hurston telephoned me at the same time. So please bear in mind that my part in this affair was confined to the activities I have just outlined. I have just wired Mrs. Jelliffe to please return the script to me. As for your claims, I am naturally unable to form any judgment of them and as a matter of fact I have nothing whatsoever to do with this affair.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Barrett 

BHC/jw
Samuel French
(incorporated)
25 West 45th Street
New York, N.Y.

Mr. Carl Van Vechten,
150 West 55th St.,
New York City.
1931 January 22 : l. [1]

Mr. Carl Van Vechten,  
150 West 55th St.,  
New York City.  

Dear Mr. Van Vechten:  

I just received back from Mrs. Jelliffe of Cleveland, the script of MULEBONE, which I am forwarding at once to Miss Hurston.  

I am sorry to have contributed, though with the best intentions, to this mix-up.  

Sincerely yours,  

[Signature]

BHC/Jw
Mr. Carl Van Vechten,
150 West 55th St.,
New York City.