Comments from Winifred Van Etten

Winifred Van Etten*

*Iowa State College

Copyright ©1939 by the authors. Sketch is produced by The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress).
http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/sketch
Winifred Van Etten was born and received her preliminary education in Emmetsburg, Iowa. Later she attended Cornell College at Mount Vernon, Iowa. Since 1928 she has been an instructor in the English Department at Cornell College.

In 1936 she was awarded the Atlantic Monthly prize for fiction for her novel *I Am the Fox*. She is also the author of numerous short stories which have appeared in literary magazines. *Cattle Congress*, her most recent short story, appears in the February issue of *Atlantic Monthly*.

Comments from Winifred Van Etten

"YOU who write no doubt hope to make money writing. That is all right. I hope you do. But I hope, too, that you will write even if you never sell a thing. For this reason: Most of us go through life half awake, only dimly realizing ourselves, hardly realizing other people at all. Writing disperses this fog in which we move, compels us to look at people not only with our eyes that we may be able to picture them in words, but also with our sympathies in order that we may understand them. We become aware.

"Now awareness may be a thoroughly uncomfortable condition—it may bring out pain and sharp dissatisfaction and a tormented impotence, all of which you might escape by an insulating stupidity. It will also bring you compensations, compel your senses and your comprehension to quickened duty, make you more alive. But that, of course, you already know—if you have written at all."