

**The New York Public Library
Humanities and Social Sciences Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

Jan Gabrial Papers
1932-1940
MssCol 6096

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Summary

Main entry:	Gabrial, Jan
Title:	Jan Gabrial Papers, 1932-1940
Size:	1.3 linear feet (4 boxes)
Source:	Stephen W. Kramer, Trustee, Janine Lowry Singer Revocable Trust
Abstract:	Janine Lowry Singer (1911-2001), whose pen name was Jan Gabrial, was the first wife of British author Malcolm Lowry (1909-1957). An aspiring writer herself, her papers include correspondence, journals, manuscripts, photographic negatives, and typescripts of Malcolm Lowry's unpublished novel, "In Ballast to the White Sea."
Access:	Apply in the Special Collections Office for admission to the Manuscripts and Archives Division.
Preferred citation:	Jan Gabrial Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.
Special formats	Negatives.

Provenance note

The collection was in the possession of Jan Lowry Singer until her death in September 2001 when the collection was held in trust by Stephen W. Kramer, Trustee, who gathered and sent the materials to the NYPL.

Biographical note

Janine Lowry Singer (1911-2001), who used the pen name Jan Gabriel, was a writer and the first wife of British author Malcolm Lowry. She was born Janine Vanderheim and grew up in Bayside, Long Island, NY. She disappointed her mother, Emily F. Vanderheim, when she refused to attend Radcliffe College and, instead, chose a career in acting and enrolled in the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York. In the summer of 1927, she lived in upstate New York where she acted in summer stock plays. She met her friends Ted Gordon and Anne Hunt during this time. In 1931 a car accident left Jan's face badly damaged and she gave up acting. Her second career choice was writing and, with her mother's financial support, she decided to travel in order to inform her writing. In April 1932, she sailed to Europe and began a two year tour of the major cities.

Jan met Malcolm Lowry in Granada, Spain in May 1933 and was captivated by him, although, as her letters to her mother indicate, she had strong reservations about a relationship with him. Nevertheless, she married him on January 6, 1934, in Paris, and the two pursued their writing careers. They lived in Paris until Jan returned to the United States in April 1934. Malcolm joined her there in August that same year. The couple spent almost two years living in New York City before they moved to Cuernavaca, Mexico, in mid-1936. There Malcolm began writing, *Under the Volcano*. It was a tumultuous relationship and unconventional marriage. Lowry was drunk much of the time and jealous of Jan's friendships with men and women. In November 1937, she left him in Cuernavaca, Mexico, and went to Los Angeles where a friend, David Friede, hired her as an assistant script writer.

When Malcolm relocated to Los Angeles in the summer of 1938, the two lived separately and had intermittent contact. During this time, Malcolm was drinking so excessively that Jan wrote to his father in England for assistance. She believed Malcolm needed professional help. Malcolm's father, Arthur O. Lowry, did intercede, but not effectively enough to stop Malcolm's addiction to alcohol. In 1939, Jan filed for divorce and it was granted a year later.

Within four months of his divorce, Malcolm married his second wife, Margerie Bonner, and moved to Vancouver, B.C. He bittely and adamantly refused any contct with Jan, who waned to remain friends, and the two had only several exchanges after their divorce. Jan continued to work as an assistant script writer in Los Angeles until Friede's agency failed. She subsequently worked as a secretary to actors James Stewart, Olivia de Havilland and others. In 1944, she married Randolph Singer, a real estate broker. She later changed career and practiced real estate.

Sources:

Bowker, Gordon. *Pursued by Furies: A Life of Malcolm Lowry*. NY: St. Martin's Press, 1993.
Day, Douglas. *Malcolm Lowry: A Biography*. NY: Oxford University Press, 1973.
Gabriel, Jan. *Inside the Volcano: My Life with Malcolm Lowry*. NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
Gabriel, Jan. "Not With a Bang." *Story: The Magazine of the Short Story* 29:121 (September-October 1946):55-61.

Scope and content note

The papers consist of incoming and outgoing personal correspondence, journals and notebooks, manuscripts, personal documents and photographic negatives. The bulk of materials are limited to the years Gabriel met and married Malcolm Lowry, from 1933 to 1940, although a small portion relate to the year prior to meeting Lowry and a year or so after leaving him. Half of the collection consists of a series on Malcolm Lowry that contains a small amount of his personal correspondence, note fragments, and two copies of his manuscript, "In Ballast to the White Sea," edited by Jan Gabriel.

Gabriel's journal narrates her early impressions of an extended tour of Europe beginning in 1932. Letters to her mother, Emily F. Vanderheim, are a rich source of insight into Gabriel's experience as a young, impressionable woman, who aspires to be a writer, and who eventually encounters her future husband, a serious writer himself, in Granada, Spain, in 1933. Gabriel faithfully keeps her mother informed about events in her life and is surprisingly candid about the state of her marriage. The papers include a few letters from Gabriel to her husband during the months in 1934 when she returned to the U.S. and he remained in Paris. Incoming letters from friends and several landladies provide additional background in the character of her life during her years with Malcolm Lowry. Two notebooks and a few manuscripts illustrate Gabriel's activity as she pursued her own career in writing. Personal documents include her marriage certificate, final divorce decree, and photographic negatives. The negatives are unidentified, but presumably date from her European tour, 1932-1934.

The series entitled, "Malcolm Lowry," contains a small collection of Malcolm Lowry's correspondence and writing that were in Jan Gabriel's possession when she died in 2001. Somewhat disjointed, the correspondence includes mostly incoming letters, but there are a few letters written by Lowry. The incoming correspondence contains five letters from Arthur O. Lowry, Malcolm's father, one letter from his mother, two postcards from Malcolm's mentor, Conrad Aiken, three letters from his close friend, John Davenport, in England, and a few from two other British friends, Bill Bower and John Summerfield. The letters from Malcolm's father were written between May 1934 and August 1936. Without an income of his own, Malcolm received monthly installments of funds from his father in England, and was very much dependent upon him. The letters from Arthur Lowry express deep concern about Malcolm's lifestyle and address Malcolm's requests for additional money. The letters from friends contain casual references to mutual friends, contemporary writers and personal experiences. A small file of letters written by Malcolm Lowry contain two unmailed letters, one addressed to novelist Julien Green and the other to Nordahl Grieg, the Norwegian writer. Both letters are almost identical to letters contained in his manuscript of "In Ballast to the White Sea." The other letters in this file are photocopies of a few letters written by Malcolm to Jan and several to Margerie Bonner Lowry, his second wife.

Two copies of "In Ballast to the White Sea," by Malcolm Lowry, were in Jan Gabriel's possession and are contained in the final two boxes of this collection. Lowry worked on the manuscript of this novel over a period of ten years, repeatedly rewriting it from 1934 until 1944. The last iteration of it was lost in a fire at the author's home in Vancouver, B.C., in 1944. The copies contained here were edited by Jan Gabriel and consist of a typescript with editorial changes and a final copy of clean typescript. An introduction to "In Ballast to the White Sea," by Jan Gabriel, is included in this collection in Box 2.

Arrangement note

The Jan Gabrial Papers are organized in the following series:

- Series I. Correspondence, 1933-1938
- Series II. Personal Miscellany, 1933-1940
- Series III. Writings by Jan Gabrial, 1932-1937
- Series IV. Malcolm Lowry, 1933-1939

Container list

Series I. Correspondence, 1933-1938

Letters from Jan Gabrial

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1	1	Baldwin, Mrs., 1937 Jan.-Oct.
	2	Lowry, Malcolm, 1934 Apr.-Jun. Vanderheim, Emily F.
	3	1933 Sept.-Nov.
	4	1933 Dec.- 1934 Feb.
	5	1937 Aug.-Nov.
	6	1937 Dec.-1938 Apr.
	7	Miscellaneous, n.d.

Letters to Jan Gabrial

1	8	Coyle, Kathleen, 1934 Jan.-Feb.
	9	Ewen, David, 1933
	10	Hunt?, Anne, 1933 Mar.-Dec.
	11	Mattison?, F[ran], ca. 1937
	12	Miscellaneous, 1933-1934

Series II. Personal Miscellany, 1933-1940

1	13	Passport, marriage, divorce
	14-15	Photographic negatives, [1932-1934?]
	16	Receipts, legal papers, Mexico, 1937

Series III. Writings by Jan Gabrial, 1932-1937

Journals and Notebooks

2	1	Europe trip, 1932 Apr.-Sept.
	2	Paris, 1934
	3	Mexico, 1936-1937

Manuscripts, undated

2	4	Fragments (includes carbons)
	5	Short story, "Inside the Volcano" (incomplete)
	6	Introductory notes to "In Ballast to the White Sea," by Malcolm Lowry; introduction by Jan Gabrial
	7	Short story, "Stopover"
	8	Short story, "The Volcano and the Rainbowpuss"

Series IV. Malcolm Lowry, 1933-1939

Correspondence, 1939-1933

- | | | |
|---|----|--|
| 2 | 9 | Letters to Lowry from his parents, 1934-1936 |
| | 10 | Letters to Lowry from others, 1933-1936 |
| | 11 | Letters from Lowry, 1933-1939 |

Writings, undated

- | | | |
|---|----|--|
| 2 | 12 | <i>Ultramarine</i> (three bookjackets) |
| | | "In Ballast to the White Sea" |
| | | Typescript edited by Jan Gabriel |
| 3 | 1 | Chapters 1-4 |
| | 2 | Chapters 5-7 |
| | 3 | Chapters 8 11 |
| | 4 | Chapters 12-17 |
| | 5 | Chapter 18 (Two versions) |
| | 6 | Fragments |
| | | Clean copy of typescript |
| 4 | 1 | Pages 1-105 |
| | 2 | Pages 106-219 |
| | 3 | Pages 220-320 |
| | 4 | Pages 321-443 |