



The New York Public Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

Sothorn and Marlowe papers

1860-1950

MssCol 2820

Accessioned by LB, August 1987

Summary

Creator: Sothorn, E. H. (Edward Hugh), 1859-1933

Title: Sothorn and Marlowe papers

Date: 1860-1950

Size: 10 linear feet (12 boxes, 9 v.)

Source: 1951, 1952, 1954, Received from Estate of Julia Marlowe Sothorn: Mrs. A. H. Ballard, Miss Mary Van Winkle, Mrs. Robert H. Davis, Mr. Lawrence Veiller, Madge Pemberton

Abstract: Edward Hugh Sothorn (1859-1933) was an American actor and author who appeared on the New York and London stages; Julia Marlowe (1865-1950) was a successful actress in New York. They became co-stars in 1904, were married in 1911, and toured, mainly in Shakespeare plays, until her final retirement in 1924. Sothorn devoted much of his later years to public readings, lectures and writing. Collection consists of correspondence, writings, theatre materials, financial and legal papers, and photographs. Correspondence, ca. 1860-1950, is between Sothorn and Marlowe and with colleagues, family and friends; other correspondence concerns business and legal matters. Literary papers, ca. 1908-1929, contain notes, copy books, drafts, and typescripts of essays, poems, lectures, articles, and books by Sothorn and Marlowe. Theatre-related materials, 1920s-1930s, include papers on Sothorn's recitals, notes, prompt books, account books, box office statements, and 1926 Actors' Equity scrapbook. Financial and legal materials, 1908-1940s, pertain to theatrical finances and personal affairs. Also, photographs of Sothorn and Marlowe, and their family and friends.

Access: Advance notice required.

Preferred citation: Sothorn and Marlowe papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: Materials in English

Processing note: Accessioned by LB, August 1987

Creator History

Edward Hugh Sothorn (1859-1933) actor and author, was the son of actor Edward Askew Sothorn. Born in New Orleans and educated in London, Edward Hugh Sothorn made his first appearance on stage in New York September 8, 1879, as the cabman in "Brother Sam", a play in which his father was also appearing. In 1881 he went to London and made his first appearance on the London stage at the Royalty Theater, as Mr Sharpe in "False Colors". Sothorn returned to New York in 1883 and the next year began touring the United States. In 1885 he joined the Lyceum company as leading man and remained there until 1898. After the conclusion of his long connection with the Lyceum Theater, Sothorn continued to be a success on stage.

Julia Marlowe (1866-1950) actress whose real name was Sarah Francis Frost, was born in England and brought to the United States at the age of four. Marlowe, using the stage name Fanny Brough, made her first appearance on the stage in 1878. After some years on tour and a prolonged period of study, in 1887 she made her first appearance in New York. Marlowe was immediately successful, and began a long career as a leading actress.

Sothorn and Marlowe became co-stars in 1904 under the management of Charles Frohman. They appeared for the first time together in "Romeo and Juliet" at the Illinois Theater, Chicago, September 19, 1904. In 1907, then under the management of Messrs. Shubert, Sothorn made his reappearance on the London stage after a twenty-four year absence. It was Marlowe's first appearance on the London stage. During their five week engagement she earned much praise for her performances.

The artistic partnership was temporarily dissolved in June 1907, and each formed their own company. The team was reunited in New York, in 1909, to play "Anthony and Cleopatra". They were married in 1911 and proceeded to tour until Marlowe's retirement from the stage, due to ill-health, was announced in August 1915. Marlowe subsequently rejoined her husband to play mainly in Shakespeare until her final retirement in 1924. Sothorn continued to appear occasionally, being last seen on stage in 1927. He devoted much of his later years to public readings, lectures and writing.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of this famous Shakespearean acting team are arranged in four series: correspondence, literary papers, theater related material and financial and legal papers. The correspondence has been sub-divided as follows: general correspondence, 1886 - 1950, is incoming and in chronological order; there is much business correspondence, letters relating to legal matters and from family and friends. Among frequent correspondents are Elizabeth Van Winkle, Lawrence and Amy Veiller, Edward Bok, Walter Jordan and Charles Edward Russell. Second: correspondence between Sothorn and Marlowe, 1904 - 1933; at least three-fourths of the correspondence comprises the exchange of letters between them. Whenever they were apart each wrote the other of the days problems, accomplishments or events of interest to themselves. The bulk of their correspondence is during World War I, when Sothorn was in Europe, associated with the Y. M. C. A., providing recreational service to the armed forces and then, after Marlowe went into retirement. Ill-health caused Marlowe to seek the warmer climate of Egypt, summering in Switzerland or France. For a few years prior to his death in 1933, Sothorn continued on the stage alone and on lecture tours.

After correspondence between Sothorn and Marlowe, there are letters from Marlowe to Mary Daly, 1897 - 1933, life long friend and companion of Marlowe; papers relating to Mary Daly; Sothorn family correspondence and papers, ca. 1860 - 1933, and letters of sympathy to Marlowe following the death of Sothorn.

The literary papers contain a considerable amount of notes, copy books, rough drafts or typed copies of

essays, poems, lectures, magazine articles and books. Sothern was more active in this field than his wife; his contributions appeared in journals ranging from the *North American Review* to the *Saturday Evening Post*. He published an autobiography and at least one volume of verse; he was most skilful in shorter poetic forms such as the sonnet.

The theater related material contains papers on Sothern's Town Hall recitals, ideas for plays notes on the theater, prompt books, Sothern and Marlowe account books and box office statements for 1905-1913. Also included is Actors' Equity related scrapbook, 1926.

There is much financial and legal material but only a small portion has been sorted. The sorted material, 1908 - 1940s, deals mostly with theatrical finances but personal legal papers are included. Unsorted papers, 1930s - 1940s, include canceled checks, bank statements, papers relating to stocks and bonds, personal correspondence relating to financial matters and much correspondence from their lawyer and accountant Waldron K. Post.

There is a large amount of photographs of Sothern, Marlowe, friends and family.

The collection ends with nine slipcases containing writings by, with the exception of one, Edward Sothern and Julia Marlowe.

Arrangement: Four series: I. Correspondence; II. Literary Papers; III. Theatre-Related Material; IV. Financial and Legal Papers

Key Terms

Occupations

Actors
Authors

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Photographic prints
Prompt books
Scrapbooks

Subjects

Theater -- New York (State) -- New York

Names

Bok, Edward William, 1863-1930
Daly, Mary
Jordan, Walter
Marlowe, Julia, 1865-1950
Post, Waldron K
Russell, Charles Edward, 1860-1941
Sothern, E. H. (Edward Hugh), 1859-1933
Van Winkle, Elizabeth
Veiller, Amy
Veiller, Lawrence, 1872-1959
Sothern family
Actors' Equity Association

Container List

CORRESPONDENCE

- b. 1 General correspondence 1886-1934
- b. 2 General correspondence 1935-1950, undated
- b. 2 J. M. S. and E. H. S. to friends circa 1904-1947
- b. 3 E. H. S. to J. M. S 1904-1923
- b. 4 E. H. S. to J. M. S 1924-1929
- b. 5 E. H. S. to J. M. S 1929-1933, undated
- b. 5 J. M. S. to E. H. S 1914-1931
- b. 6 J. M. S. to E. H. S 1932-1933
- b. 6 J. M. S. to Mary Daly 1897-1933, undated
- b. 6 Papers relating to Mary Daly
- b. 6 Sothorn family correspondence and papers circa 1860-1933
- b. 6 Letters of sympathy to J. M. S 1933
- b. 7 LITERARY PAPERS circa 1908-1929
- b. 8 THEATER RELATED MATERIAL 1920s-1930s
- b. 9 notebooks, promptbooks, scrapbooks
- b. 10 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL PAPERS 1908-1940s
- b. 11 Unsorted financial papers circa 1930s-1940s
- b. 12 Photographs and artifacts

Writings

- v. 1 *Julia Marlowe's Story, typescript by Edward H. Sothorn*
- v. 2 *Julia Marlowe's Story, typescript by Edward H. Sothorn*
- v. 3 *Seven Sonnets to Julia Marlowe Taber, by Charles E. Russell*
- v. 4 *Great Actors of the Past, manuscript by Edward H. Sothorn*
- v. 5 *Rosemary and Rue: My Story, typescript by Julia Marlowe*
- v. 6 *The Melancholy Tale of Me, typescript by Edward H. Sothorn*
- v. 7-8 *The Melancholy Tale of Me, MS, first and second drafts by E. H. S*
- v. 9 *Matter for a May Morning, MS proofs, by E. H. S*