Summary

Main Entry: Jordan, Elizabeth Garver, 1867-1947

Title: Elizabeth Garver Jordan papers, 1891-1945

Size: 1.4 linear ft. (3 boxes)


Restrictions: None

Description: Elizabeth Garver Jordan (1867-1947) was an author, journalist, suffragist, and editor of Harper's Bazar. The collection consists of correspondence from prominent literary figures and women’s suffrage supporters as well as a typescript draft of The Sturdy Oak (1917), a suffrage novel by fourteen American authors, edited by Elizabeth Jordan. Among the many notable correspondents are: Susan B. Anthony, Gertrude Atherton, John Kendrick Bangs, Alice Brown, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Samuel L. Clemens, Margaret Deland, Julia Ward Howe, Henry James, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Effie Shannon, Anna Howard Shaw, Otis Skinner, Henry Van Dyke, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, and Mary E. Wilkins Freeman.

Elizabeth Garver Jordan, journalist and suffragist, was born on May 9, 1865 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the elder of two daughters of William Frank Jordan and Margaretta Garver. Shortly after graduating from St. Mary's High School, Jordan entered business school to learn shorthand. She secured her first job editing the women's page of Peck's Sun, owned and operated by George W. Peck. She held her next position as secretary to the Milwaukee superintendent of schools while concurrently reporting for The St. Paul Globe and the Chicago Tribune.

In 1890, Jordan moved to New York City and joined the staff of The World. Her first major interview was with Caroline Scott Harrison, wife of President Benjamin Harrison. This interview was considered a major scoop because Mrs. Harrison rarely gave interviews. Impressed with her performance, The World sent Jordan to the mountain regions of Virginia and Tennessee to write an account of the inhabitants. The result was a series of sympathetic articles. Besides these accomplishments, Jordan was well known for her column True Stories of the News that chronicled everyday life in the city. She also covered the Lizzie Borden murder trial and in that same year wrote a series of articles on tenement conditions in New York City, published under the title The Submerged Tenth (1893).

While in her thirties, Jordan was chosen to be the editor of Harper's Bazar (1900-1913). After William Randolph Hearst acquired the magazine in 1913, Jordan remained with its former publisher, Harper and Brothers as literary advisor. In this capacity she was credited with accepting Sinclair Lewis’ first novel Our Mr. Wrenn (1914) for publication. She was also responsible for bringing the work of women novelists to the public, including the works of Zona Gale and Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

Jordan campaigned for the women's suffrage movement as a speaker, writer and editor of The Sturdy Oak, a composite novel by fourteen American writers who supported women's rights. She solicited the authors and contributors who included Fannie Hurst, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Mary Heaton Vorse, Alice Duer Miller, Ethel Watts Mumford, and William Allen White. The novel was published by Henry Holt & Co. (1917) and later sold to Collier's Weekly for serial publication (1917).

Jordan eventually left Harper and Brothers to work as an editorial director for Goldwyn Pictures. She held this position briefly. During her entire life Jordan remained very active and continued to write novels. Her memoir Three Rousing Cheers (1938), outlined her rich and varied life. Jordan died on February 24, 1947 in her home at 36 Gramercy Park in New York City. Never married, she was survived by her only immediate relative, Mrs. Edward Beyer. Jordan was buried in Florence, Massachusetts, her favorite summer retreat.
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers, 1891-1945, contain correspondence and a typescript draft of the novel *The Sturdy Oak*. The correspondence is mainly from authors and writers and from individuals who supported women's suffrage. There are a few carbon replies from Jordan. Henry James (1843-1916), American author and playwright, was a prominent correspondent who maintained a long friendship with Jordan. James’s letters, 1904-1909, relate mainly to his American lecture tour and his contribution to *Harper's Bazar*.

Other prominent correspondents include Susan B. Anthony, Gertrude Atherton, Mary Hunter Austin, Josephine Dodge Daskam Bacon, Alice Brown, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Dorothy Canfield Fischer, Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain), Margaret Deland, William Dean Howells, Jack London, Anna H. Shaw, Otis Skinner, Henry Van Dyke and Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

*The Sturdy Oak* is a typescript draft edited by Jordan. This draft does not contain chapter 13 by Mary Hunter Austin; there are two copies or versions of most of the chapters.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. General Correspondence, Boxes 1-3

This series is arranged alphabetically by correspondent. The bulk of the letters, 1891-1945, are to Elizabeth Garver Jordan from authors, writers, acquaintances, and suffragists. There are a few carbon replies. There are also a few literary typescripts, and photographs of individuals. Correspondents most heavily represented include Gertrude Atherton, Josephine Dodge Daskam Bacon, Alice Brown, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Margaret Deland, William Dean Howells, Julia Ward Howe, Henry James, Kate Douglas Wiggin (Riggs), Margaret E. Sangster, Effie Shannon, Anna Howard Shaw, Henry Van Dyke, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, and Edith Wyatt. Other correspondents in this series include Susan B. Anthony, John Kendrick Bangs, Samuel L. Clemens, Fannie Hurst, Otis Skinner, and Henry Van Dyke.

Series II. *The Sturdy Oak*, Box 3

This series contains typescript drafts of the various chapters *The Sturdy Oak: a composite novel of American politics* submitted to Jordan by the authors. Only chapter thirteen by Mary Hunter Austin is missing. Included also are two folders of correspondence about the book, including letters from the contributors, most notably William Allen White.
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7 Letter, 5 March 1917. William Allen White to Jordan. Suggestions for chapters to be changed in *The Sturdy Oak*.
8-10 Correspondence regarding *The Sturdy Oak*. 1915-1917; n.d.
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