



The New York Public Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

Van Dresser-Norman papers

1895-1956

MssCol 2256

Summary

Creator: Norman, Gertrude, d. 1961

Title: Van Dresser-Norman papers

Date: 1895-1956

Source: Gift of Miss Gertrude Norman, 1956 and Edward A. Craig, 1967.

Abstract: Papers of soprano Marcia Van Dresser (1880-1937) and her secretary and companion Gertrude Norman. Consists chiefly of letters they received from prominent figures in the performing arts, 1895-1956, as well as photographs, playbills, clippings, and other memorabilia.

Access: Advance notice required.

Alternative Form Available: Letters from Gordon Craig to Gertrude Norman, 1896-1898, 1904, available on microfilm; New York Public Library

Preferred citation: Van Dresser-Norman Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Richard Salvato and Laura Bailey; machine readable finding aid created by APEX data services and revised by Chatham Ewing.

Creator History

Marcia Van Dresser, (December 4, 1880 - July 11, 1937) opera and concert soprano, was born in Memphis, Tennessee. She attended local schools and later studied music under Mrs. Robinson Duff, Hermine Bosetti and Jean De Reszke. In 1898 she joined the Bostonians Company and toured, singing the lead soprano roles for four years. In 1903 she appeared with the Metropolitan Opera Company in minor parts and then went to Munich for further training. Van Dresser sang in Grand Opera at Dresden, 1908 - 1910, at Frankfurt, 1911 - 1914 and made guest appearances elsewhere in Europe. After returning to the United States in 1914, she was a member of the Chicago Opera Company, 1915 - 1916 and appeared in concert from 1916 to 1918. Van Dresser died in London after a long illness.

Gertrude Norman, who died in 1961, was for many years a secretary and companion to Marcia Van Dresser.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of correspondence, 1895-1956, primarily to Gertrude Norman. The letters, which are personal in nature, are arranged alphabetically by writer. Among prominent correspondents are Yvonne Arnaud, Lyell Barbour, Clifford Bax, Edward Gordon Craig, Henri Deering, Geraldine Farrar, Clara Clemens Gabilowitsch and Arthur William Row, in addition to other actors, singers, musicians and writers. The papers include letters from William Van Dresser and his wife, 1935-1948, and letters of sympathy to Gertrude Norman on the death of Marcia Van Dresser in 1937. Collection ends with a group of playbills, clippings and photographs of friends.

Key Terms

Subjects

Opera
Singing

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Photographic prints

Occupations

Singers

Names

Norman, Gertrude, d. 1961
Arnaud, Yvonne
Barbour, Lyell
Bax, Clifford, 1886-1962
Clemens, Clara
Craig, Edward Gordon, 1872-1966
Deering, Henri
Farrar, Geraldine, 1882-1967
Row, Arthur William
Van Dresser, Marcia, 1880-1937
Van Dresser, William

Container List

Series I. Correspondence

Letters by Gertrude Norman to:

- b. 1.1 Craig, Edward Gordon [1905], n.d. (3 items)
- b. 1.1 Nicholis, Lee 1938 (1 item)
- b. 1.1 Van Dresser, William, and Arthur Row (Copy of telegrams)

Letters to Marcia Van Dresser and Gertrude Norman from:

- b. 1.2 Ahlefeldt-Laurvig, Mary 1924 (1 item)
- b. 1.2 Allen, Viola 1930 (1 item)
- b. 1.3 Arnaud, Yvonne 1931-1956, n.d. (c.60 items)
- b. 1.2 Atherton, Getrude 1905-1938, n.d. (13 items)
- b. 1.2 Attwood, Clare 1935-1947, n.d. (9 items)
- b. 1.4 Barbour, Lyell 1931-1955 (c.100 items)
- b. 1.4 1931-1949
- b. 1.5 1949-1955
- b. 2.6 Bartlett, Ethel 1933-1954, n.d. (11 items)
- b. 2.6 Bax, Sir Arnold 1907-1953, n.d. (31 items)
- b. 2.6 Bax, Clifford 1932-1953, n.d. (c.80 items)
- b. 2.6 Bax, Mrs., (mother of Arnold and Clifford) 1937, 1938, 1940 (6 items)
- b. 2.7 Benson, E.F. 1927-1936 (7 items)
- b. 2.7 Bigelow, Poultney 1936-1940 (4 items)
- b. 2.7 Bispham, David 1917 (1 item)
- b. 2.7 Bitter, Marie [1938], 1941, 1944, 1945 (4 items)
- b. 2.7 Bliss, Sir Arthur 1923 (3 items)
- b. 2.8 Blom, Eric 1952-1955 (7 items)
- b. 2.8 Bonn, Theresa 1943 (1 item)
- b. 2.8 Bragdon, Claude 1940, 1943 (2 items)
- b. 2.8 Brunner, Beatrice 1933-1936 (5 items)
- b. 2.8 Campanini, Cleofonte 1917 (1 item)
- b. 2.9 Carpenter, John Alden 1917, 1938 (3 items)
- b. 2.9 Clemens, Clara SEE: Gabilowitsch, Clara Clemens
- b. 2.9 Coates, Albert 1923 (2 items)
- b. 2.9 Coward, Noel 1929 (1 item)
- b. 2.9 Craig, Edith 1938, 1945, 1946, n.d (6 items)
- b. 2.9 Craig, Ellen Gordon 1945, 1953-1955 (4 items)
- b. 2.10 Craig, Edward Gordon 1896-1898, 1904, 1954-1955 (41 items)
- b. 3.11 Crothers, Rachel n.d. (2 items)
- b. 3.11 Cundell, Edric 1949 (1 item)
- b. 3.11 Curzon, Clifford 1947, n.d. (2 items)
- b. 3.11 D'Alvarez, Marguerite 1937-1951 (1 item)

Series I. Correspondence (cont.)

Letters to Marcia Van Dresser and Gertrude Norman from: (cont.)

- b. 3.12 Damrosch, Hetty (Mrs. Frank) 1942-1950, n.d. (7 items)
- b. 3.12 Deering, Henri 1949-1956 (43 items)
- b. 3.13 Dellman, Hugh 1938, 1946, n.d. (3 items)
- b. 3.13 Dobson, Tom 1916 (1 item)
- b. 3.13 Donahue, Lester [1957], n.d. (2 items)
- b. 3.13 Durieux, Tilla n.d. (1 item)
- b. 3.13 Duse, Eleanora c.1903 (1 item)
- b. 3.13 Easton, Florence 1937-1953 (8 items)
- b. 3.14 Elliott, Maud H. 1939 (1 item)
- b. 3.14 Emerson, Edith 1937-1954 (19 items)
- b. 3.14 Eno, Alberta 1943 (1 item)
- b. 3.14 Eno, William Phelps 1940, 1943, 1944 (3 items)
- b. 3.15 Fairchild, Blair n.d. (1 item)
- b. 3.15 Farrar, Geraldine c.1918-1956, n.d. (c.50 items)
- b. 4.16 Fassbender, Zdenka n.d. (1 item)
- b. 4.16 Fiske, Minnie Maddern 1902-1929, n.d. (17 items)
- b. 4.16 Forbes, Ethel 1931, n.d. (4 items)
- b. 4.16 Friesch, Irene n.d. (1 item)
- b. 4.17 Gabrilowitsch, Clara Clemens 1932-1956, n.d. (65 items)
- b. 4.18 Gabrilowitsch, Ossip 1919, 1921
- b. 4.18 Garden, Mary 1943 (1 item)
- b. 4.18 Gerhardt, Elena 1936 (1 item)
- b. 4.18 Gordon, Ruth 1955 (1 item)
- b. 4.18 Grey, Katherine 1937, 1948, n.d. (16 items)
- b. 4.19 Hammond, Natalie H. 1917 (1 item)
- b. 4.19 Hayman, Laure 1922 (1 item)
- b. 4.19 Henschel, Helen 1949 (1 item)
- b. 4.19 Hesse, Princess Friedrich Carl of, (Margaret, Landgraefin von Hessen. Sister of Kaiser Wilhelm II) 1934. (1 item)
With reply of Marcia Van Dresser
- b. 4.19 Hofmann, Josef 1938 (1 item)
- b. 4.19 Hughes, Herbert 1933 (3 items)
- b. 4.19 Huntington, Alice 1940-1945 (7 items)
- b. 5.20 Hutchinson, Bhaia 1922 (5 items)
- b. 5.20 Huygelen, P. 1948 (1 item)
- b. 5.20 Johnstone, Julie 1946 (1 item)
- b. 5.20 Kingston, Gertrude 1932-1937, n.d. (17 items)
- b. 5.20 Lawrence, Fay Davis 1942 (1 item)
- b. 5.21 Lawton, Mary 1937-1937, n.d. (18 items)
- b. 5.21 Leginska, Ethel 1939-1948 (2 items)
- b. 5.22 Loofler, Charles 1919 (1 item)
- b. 5.22 Loraine, Winifred 1938 (1 item)

Series I. Correspondence (cont.)

Letters to Marcia Van Dresser and Gertrude Norman from: (cont.)

- b. 5.22 Maeterlinck, Maurice 1901-1911 (4 items)
- b. 5.22 Marchant, Sir Stanley 1949 (2 items)
- b. 5.22 Marlowe, Julia 1918 (1 item)
- b. 5.22 Martin-Harvey, Sir John 1941 (1 item)
- b. 5.23 Melchior, Lauritz 1938, 1941 (2 items)
- b. 5.23 Nesbit, Kathleen 1941 (1 item)
- b. 5.23 Newman, Ernest 1938 (1 item)
- b. 5.23 Newton, Ivor 1938-1955 (5 items)
- b. 5.24 Nicholis, Lee 1937?-1955, n.d. (27 items)
- b. 5.24 Oakley, Violet 1937-1952, n.d. (19 items)
- b. 6.25 Peck, E.D. 1945 (1 item)
- b. 6.25 Poke, Greville 1948 (1 item)
- b. 6.25 Reszke, Jean de 1909, 1910, n.d (3 items)
- b. 6.25 Ripley, T.E. 1938 (1 item)
- b. 6.25 Roosevelt, Eleanor 1942 (1 item)
- b. 6.25 Rooy, Anton Van n.d. (1 item)
- Row, Arthur William 1933-1955 (c.200 items)
- b. 6.26 1933-1937 Nov
- b. 6.27 1937 Dec-1942
- b. 6.28 1943-1955, n.d.
- b. 6.29 St. John, Christopher 1932, 1940, 1947 (3 items)
- b. 6.29 Salzedo, Carlos 1932-1947 (5 items)
- b. 6.29 Salzedo, Minnie 1938-1955 (10 items)
- Samossoud, Clara SEE: Gabrilowitsch, Clara Clemens
- b. 6.29 Satterlee, Herbert 1932-1947 (24 items)
- b. 6.29 Satterlee, Louisa Pierpont 1937 (1 item)
- b. 7.30 Satterlee, Marion 1945-1955, n.d. (11 items)
- b. 7.30 Scott, Cyril 1933-1955, n.d. (93 items)
- b. 7.30 Shattuck, Arthur 1938, 1943, n.d (4 items)
- b. 7.30 Shaw, Robert A. 1931-1947 (23 items)
- b. 7.31 Skinner, Cornelia Otis 1935-1942 (5 items)
- b. 7.31 Skinner, Maud 1906-1936, n.d. (7 items)
- b. 7.31 Skinner, Otis 1937-1937, n.d. (14 items)
- b. 7.32 Sothern, Julia M. SEE: Marlowe, Julia
- b. 7.32 Stoddard, Lorimer 1900 (1 item)
- b. 7.32 Stokowski, Leopold 1917-1951, n.d. (21 items)
- b. 7.32 Strong, Austin n.d. (1 item)
- b. 7.32 Sturges, Marie 1954 (1 item)
- b. 7.33 Sutro, Alfred n.d. (1 item)
- b. 7.33 Symons, Arthur 1904-1907 (12 items)
- b. 7.33 Tee-Van, Helen 1936-1946, n.d. (5 items)

Series I. Correspondence (cont.)

Letters to Marcia Van Dresser and Gertrude Norman from: (cont.)

- b. 7.33 Termina, Milka 1907 (1 item)
- b. 7.33 Terry, Ellen 1896-1905 (4 items)
- b. 7.34 Towne, Charles H. 1938, n.d. (2 items)
- b. 7.34 Vanbrugh, Irene 1940 (1 item)
- b. 7.34 Van Dresser, William 1935-1946, n.d. 1935-1937 (31 items)
- b. 7.35 Van Dresser, William 1938-1946, n.d.
- b. 7.35 Vawter, Keith 1918 (1 item)
- b. 7.35 Villard, Oswald G. 1939 (1 item)
- b. 7.36 Walpole, Sir Hugh 1921-1938, n.d. (41 items)
- b. 7.36 Webster, Peggy SEE: Whitty, Dame May
- b. 7.36 Whitty, Dame May 1938-1947 (6 items)
- b. 7.37 Wiggin, Kate Douglas 1918-1922 (13 items)
- b. 7.37 Wood, Peggy 1933-1938, n.d. (10 items)
- b. 7.37 Wyle, Irene 1945 (1 item)

Other Correspondence

- b. 7.37 Gilman, Elizabeth, to Robert J. Shaw 1940 (1 item and (1) Telegram)
- b. 7.37 Stokowski, Olga, to Minine 1938 (1 item)
- b. 7.37 Bax, Clifford, to Beverley Baxter

Unidentified letters

Letters and telegrams of condolence on the death of Marcia Van Dresser

- b. 8.38 A-H
- b. 8.39 I-R
- b. 8.40 S-W, unidentified

Series II. Photographs

- b. 8.41 Arnaud, Yvonne
- b. 8.41 Arthur, Julia
- b. 8.41 Barbour, Lyell
- b. 8.41 Durieux, Tilla
- b. 8.41 Emerson, Edith and Violet Oakley
- b. 8.41 Farrar, Geraldine
- b. 8.41 Gills, Gabrielle
- b. 8.41 Grey, Katherine
- b. 8.41 Loftus, Marie Cecilia (Cissie)
- b. 8.41 Sinduy [?], Erickson
- b. 8.41 Unidentified

Series III. Miscellany

- b. 8.42 Memorabilia
- b. 8.42 Music programmes and theatre playbills
- b. 8.42 Newspaper clippings and obituaries