Scope & Content

The collection contains the literary manuscripts of Vermont writer and editor Dorothy Charlotte Walter (1889-1967). The papers include short stories, poetry, drama, autobiography, and instructional material which she used as a teacher of English to the foreign-born. There is also a scrapbook of newspaper clippings which she made while living in Paducah, Kentucky, with many annotations in her own hand which reveal what one Vermonter thought of the South. Some of the papers have been published under the title, *A Victorian Rolling Stone: Selected Writings of Dorothy C. Walter*, compiled by Annette Nelson Gibavic in 1991 (VHS Lib. Call No. XB W171).

The collection includes a hand printed autobiographical booklet with Walter’s childhood photograph as the frontispiece. There is a wheel chart entitled, “Autobiography of a Rolling Stone, 1912-1942” as well as two brief autobiographical memoranda (MSA 151 Folder 1).

The papers were donated to the Vermont Historical Society in 1995 (ms. acc. no. 95.5) by Dorothy Walter’s niece, Annette Nelson Gibavic. They are housed in one archival flip-top box and take up 0.5 linear feet of shelf space. This collection is an addendum to the Dorothy Walter Papers (Doc 386) which were donated to the Vermont Historical Society by Lyndon State College in 1994.

Biography

Dorothy Charlotte Walter was born April 27, 1889, in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, the eldest child of Charles True and Sarah Mabel (Hall) Walter. Her siblings were Elizabeth Gregory (Walter) Nelson, Edward Hall Walter, and Alice Amelia (Walter) Fulton. Charles T. Walter was the long-time editor of the *St. Johnsbury Republican*. Dorothy Walter received her early education at Lyndon Academy and graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Brown University in 1912. Her career included teaching, research work, proofreading and editing, writing, home nursing, and many other activities which is why she came to call herself a “Rolling Stone.” Although she traveled quite extensively, the main focus of her life was Vermont and Providence, Rhode Island. In the latter place she often lived with and later cared for her uncle, Herbert Eugene Walter, who was a professor at Brown University, and her aunt Alice. Dorothy Walter spent much of her time helping other writers see their work through publication. She was an associate of Vermont literary figures John Walter Coates and Nellie Richardson and served as secretary of the League of Vermont Writers, ca. 1932-1942. She especially enjoyed being at the family home “Riverside” in Lyndon, Vermont, where she was hostess to family members and friends. She died in 1967.
For further biographical information see Doc 386 Folder 0, and *A Victorian Rolling Stone: Selected Writings of Dorothy C. Walter*, compiled by Annette Nelson Gibavic (1991).

**Related Collections**

Related collections at the Vermont Historical Society include the Dorothy Walter Papers, 1898-1941 (Doc 386), and the League of Vermont Writers Secretary’s Papers, 1928-1942 (MSA 152) which were received with this collection of Walter papers. There are also other items by or about her in the VHS collections including a draft and supporting material for a book on the Hall family, the papers of Nellie Richardson, and the papers of John Walter Coates; they may be located through the manuscript index. There are several versions of the transcript of the “Journals of Seth Shaler Arnold” which was prepared by Dorothy Walter (Doc 387); a portion of the transcript was published in *Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society*, new series vol. 8, no. 2 (June 1940): 107-193. There is a photograph of Dorothy Walter’s father in the VHS picture collection (F-PO-Walter, Charles T.).

Lyndon State College has a portion of Dorothy Walter’s book collection. Annette Nelson Gibavic of Leverett, Massachusetts, Dorothy Walter’s niece, will be donating to the Vermont Historical Society additional papers of the Walter and Hall families.

**Organization of the Collection**

Annette Gibavic has sorted the papers into three series based on her understanding of when Dorothy Walter composed these writings:

I. Early Period
II. Middle Period
III. Late Period

**Inventory**

I. Early Period

  MSA 151:1  Autobiography
  2  Biographical information on Dorothy Walter
  3  Stories about Riverside:
     “The Broken Commandment”
     “In Praise of Kerosene”
     Author’s Note On “A Meeting of the Story Club”
     “Mrs. Morrow’s Shoes”
     “The New One, Scarlet Fever “
     “While Grandmother Went to Town”
  4  Booklets:
     “Brother John’s Leg”
     “John Dopple”
“Of Emily Smith”

II. Middle Period
5 Americanization
6 Stories:
   “Authentic Accents In Playwriting”
   “Flowers and the Foreigners”
   “Latch Key In Manhattan”
   “Lovecraft and Benefit Street”
   “The May Storm”
   “The Muse at Work”
   “Open Sesame”
   “Remembrances of Teddy Roosevelt”
   “Soldier Beans”
   “These People”
   “The Walter Family In Two Wars”

III. Late Period
7 Paducah, Kentucky, scrapbook
8 Plays:
   “Bonnie Prince Charlie”
   “Bread [Two copies]”
   “Geometrical Progression”
   “The Masque of 1912”
   “Spook”
   “Vermont and the Flag”
9 Poems:
   “A Book for Dorothy Ellen Fulton”
   “Bridegroom’s Song”
   “Business Girls’ Vacation”
   “For Ruth Story Devereaux Eddy”
   “From City Sidewalks To Hills Far Away”
   “The Hand Of God”
   “Letter”
   “Hurdygurdy”
   “Jack O’Lantern”
   “The League of Vermont Writers Meets At the Camp For Crippled Children”
   “An Obliging Daughter”
   “Old Telesiphone Blais”
   “Paraphrase of the Psalm”
   “Raspberries Seashells”
   “A Song”
   “Source”
   “Source of Soup”
   “To a Lady of Ninety”
"On a Writers’ Association Meeting at a Camp For Crippled Children"

10  Stories I:
    “Aluminum Pete”
    “Ants”
    “Arethusa’s Wicked Day”
    “The Betsey Book”
    “Bud’s Exit From Hilltop Farm”
    “Christmas Greetings”
    “Church Music In Olden Days”
    “Dollars and Sense”
    “Eggs are Up and Pork is Down”
    “Gift Suggestion”
    “Here is Belladonna”
    “Housecleaning”
    “A Lincoln Story”
    “The Northwest Passage”
    “On the Flight of Time”
    “One Vermont Boy’s Day”
    “The Perfect Squelch”
    “Reaping by Moonlight”
    “A Story About Little May Hall”
    “A Travel Story”

11  Stories II:
    “Basal Metabolism”
    “The Impolite Dinner”
    “The Lost Bear”
    “No Sound of Revelry By Night”
    “Notes On Concord Corner”
    “A Reading From Robert Frost”
    “Sheffield Heights”

12  Stories III:
    “The Big Present”
    “Made-To-Order Stories”
    “One Sunday At Hilltop Farm”

By William E. Osgood
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