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THE PAPERS OF LAURA BENET

Accession #91-014



Left to right:
Laura, Stephen Vincent, and William Rose Benet

- Dates** Inclusive: 1944-1976
- Extent** 3 boxes (1 oversized) / .75 cubic feet plus 1 oversized box
- Creator** Laura Benet (1884-1979)
- Access/Use** The collection is open for research.
- Copyright is retained by Brooklyn College.
- Materials can be accessed at the Brooklyn College Archives & Special Collections, Main floor, 2900 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210.
- Languages** English
- Finding Aid** Guide is available in-house and online.
- Acquisition/Appraisal** Papers were deposited in the library archive in the 1960(s).
- Description Control** Finding aid adheres to that in *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.
- Preferred Citation** Item, folder title, box number, Papers of Laura Benet, Brooklyn College Library Archive & Special Collections, Brooklyn College Library

Subject Headings Benet, Laura, 1884-1979.

Benet, Laura -- Childhood and youth -- Juvenile literature.

Benet, William Rose, 1886-1950 -- Childhood and youth -- Juvenile literature.

Benet, Stephen Vincent, 1898-1943 -- Childhood and youth -- Juvenile literature.

Poets, English -- Biography -- Juvenile literature.

Poets, American.

Poets, American -- Biography -- Juvenile literature.

Poets, American -- 19th century -- Biography -- Juvenile literature.

Children's poetry -- History and criticism.

Children's literature -- Bio-bibliography.

Children -- Books and reading -- English-speaking countries.

Explorers -- Africa, Sub-Saharan -- Biography.

Explorers -- Great Britain -- Biography.

American literature -- New England -- History and criticism -- Juvenile literature.

Authors, American -- Homes and haunts -- New England -- Juvenile literature.

Authors, English -- Juvenile literature.

Humorists, American.

Manners and customs -- Fiction.

Biographical Note

Laura Benét (1884-1979), social worker, newspaper editor, poet, novelist and biographer, was born in Brooklyn, New York, on June 13, 1884 into an army family. She was the daughter of James Walker, a graduate of West Point and an army officer, and Frances Neill (Rose) Benet. Her two younger brothers became distinguished literary figures. William Rose Benet (1886-1950), a writer, poet and critic was the editor of the Saturday Review; Stephen Vincent Benet (1898-1943) won the Pulitzer Prize in 1929 for his *John Brown's Body* and won another posthumously (in 1944) for an unfinished narrative poem. Laura graduated from the Emma Willard School in Troy, New York, received her A.B. degree from Vassar College (1907) and Litt.D. (Doctor of Letters) from Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pa. (1967).

Ms. Benet was a social worker at the Spring Street Settlement House (1913-1916), at the Children's Aid Society (1917) and was an inspector for the Red Cross Sanitary Commission during World War I. Thereafter, Ms. Benet found employment at several New York newspapers; she was assistant book page editor at the *New York Evening Post* (1926-1928), assistant book page editor at the *New York Evening Sun* (1928-1929), and substitute review editor at the *New York Times* (1930). She occasionally submitted her verse and reviews to Literary Review. Ms. Benet's first book of poetry, *Noah's Dove*, was published in 1929. Although Ms. Benet wrote many children's books and adult biographies, she always considered herself primarily a poet.

Laura Benet died on February 17, 1979. She was buried with her parents Arlington National Cemetery.

Selected Bibliography

(Most available in the Brooklyn College Library)

Poetry

Fair Bred. New York: T. Seltzer, 1921.

Noah's Dove. Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1929.

Basket for a Fair. Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1934.

Is Morning Sure? New York: Odyssey, 1947.

In Love with Time. New Hampshire: Wake-Brook House, 1959.

Bridge of a Single Hair; a Book of Poems. Boston: Branden Press, 1974.

Fiction

Goods and Chattels. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran, 1930.

The Hidden Valley. New York: Dodd, Mead 1938.

Horseshoe Nails. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1943.

Biography

The Boy Shelley. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1937.

Enchanting Jenny Lind. New York: Dodd, Mead 1939.

Roxana Rampant. New York: Dodd, Mead 1940.

Young Edgar Allan Poe. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1941.

Come Slowly, Eden: A Novel about Emily Dickinson. New York: Dodd, Mead 1942.

Washington Irving, Explorer of American Legend. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1944.

Thackeray, of the Great Heart and Humorous Pen. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1947.

Coleridge, Poet of Wild Enchantment. New York: Dodd, 1952.

Stanley, Invincible Explorer. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1955.

The Mystery of Emily Dickinson. New York: Dodd, 1974.

For children

Caleb's Luck, New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1942.

Barnum's First Circus and Other Stories. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1949.

Famous American Poets. New York: Dodd, Mead 1950.

Famous Poets for Young People. New York: Dodd, Mead 1964.

Famous Storytellers for Young People. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1968.

Famous New England Authors. New York: Dodd, Mead 1970.

Other

Famous American Humorists. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1959.

Famous English and American Essayists. New York: Dodd, Mead 1966.

MEMOIRS

When William Rose, Stephen Vincent, and I Were Young. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1976.

Scope and Content Note

The Papers of Laura Benet is a small collection contained in one regular size, one small, and one oversized archival box. They consist of Ms. Benet's personal diaries, several folders of correspondence, and the proof of her book *Famous American Humorists* (1959). There is also a copy of Ms. Benet's memoir titled *When William Rose, Stephen Vincent and I were Young* (1976).

Sub-Group / Series Descriptions

Sub-Group I: Personal Papers, 1944-1980

Series 1: Diaries, 1944-1955. 5 folders. Chronological arrangement.

This series contains Laura Benet's diaries that date from 1944 through 1955. Ms. Benet's writes about the weather, her day-to-day appointments and activities which she describes in great detail, her opinions of books and plays, important news of the day, and the passing of friends and famous figures. Ms. Benet records, particularly in her early diaries, her royalty payments and daily expenses.

Series 2: Correspondence, 1941-1952. 2 folders. Arrangement varies.

In the correspondence grouping, there are several letters to and from Ms. Marianne Moore, the famous American poet. There is also a folder that contains letters to and from Brooklyn College regarding Ms. Benet's donating some items to the college.

Sub-Group II: Publications, 1959-1976

Series 3: Publications, 1959-1976. 1 folder plus 1 book. Arrangement varies.

This series contains a folder with a copy of the proof of Ms. Benet's *Famous American Humorists* (1959), the actual proof which is in an oversized box, and her memoir titled *When William Rose, Stephen Vincent and I were Young* (1976).

Container List

Box 1

Sub-Group I: Personal Papers, 1944-1980

Series 1: Diaries, 1944-1955

Folder 1 – Diary, 1944 & 1945

Folder 2 – Diary, 1946 & 1947

Folder 3 – Diary, 1948 & 1950

Folder 4 – Diary, 1952 & 1954

Folder 5 – Diary, 1955

Box 2

Series 2: Correspondence, 1941-1980

Folder 1 – Benet from Moore, 1941 – 1952

Folder 2 – Brooklyn College

Sub-Group II: Publications, 1959-1976

Series 3: Publications, 1959-1976

Folder 3 – Proof of *Famous American Humorists*, 1959 PART 1

Folder 4 – Proof of *Famous American Humorists*, 1959 PART 2 (This is a copy. See oversized box 3 for the original.)

Folder 5 - 1 Book – *When William Rose, Stephen Vincent and I were Young*, 1976

Box 3

Folder 1- Original Proof of *Famous American Humorists*, 1959 PART 2

(2016)