

Collection #  
M 0673  
OM 0363  
BV 3061–3062

**JULIA GRAYDON SHARPE  
PAPERS, 1878–1935**

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Processed by

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17 April 1996

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September 2013

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## COLLECTION INFORMATION

**VOLUME OF COLLECTION:** Manuscript Materials: 2 document cases, 1 oversize folder, 2 bound volumes  
Visual Materials: 1 photograph box, 1 OVB photograph box, 1 OVB Graphics folder, 3 photograph albums

**COLLECTION DATES:** Inclusive 1878–1935; bulk 1894–1898

**PROVENANCE:** Charles Latham, Jr., North Thetford, VT, 1981, 1988, 1996, 1997; Tom Shipley, Indianapolis, 2003

**RESTRICTIONS:** None

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**ALTERNATE FORMATS:**

**RELATED HOLDINGS:** SC 2535 Joseph K. Sharpe, Jr. (brother); SC 1793 Mary Ellen Graydon Sharpe (mother); M 0464 T. C. Steele; SC 2458 Wijnant Johnston

**ACCESSION NUMBER:** 1981.0920, 1988.0353, 1996.0405, 1996.0418, 1996.0446, 1996.0452, 1996.0466, 1996.0955X, 1997.0052, 2003.0114, 2003.0115

**NOTES:**

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Julia Graydon Sharpe (ca 1857–1939) was born in Indianapolis, the daughter of Joseph Kinne and Mary Ellen (Graydon) Sharpe. Her father was a prosperous leather merchant and real estate operator, and for some years after the death of banker Calvin Fletcher in 1866, the family lived in the large house Fletcher had built at what is now 10th and Pennsylvania Streets.

Julia Sharpe attended private schools in Indianapolis, and then Chegaray Institute in Philadelphia where she had special instruction in voice. Returning to Indianapolis, she attended Love and Gookins' first Indiana School of Art in 1878–1880, apparently specializing in drawing. Her artistic work then underwent a hiatus, partly because her father was a victim of the depression of the 1870s, partly because of her social activities.

She was an early and longtime member of the Flower Mission (see M 0071), and an active member of The Portfolio. Her activities brought her into frequent contact with James Whitcomb Riley. In 1894–1896 she was a student of William Forsyth and T. C. Steele at their second Indiana School of Art, and in 1896 she was one of a group of students who went with Forsyth on a sketching expedition to Corydon and Cedar Farm. Apparently Forsyth was a personal admirer of Sharpe, though he married someone else the next year.

In the winter of 1896–1897 Sharpe studied in New York at the Art Students League (with Augustus Saint Gaudens among others) and at William Merritt Chase's School of Art. In the fall of 1898 she went with her six-year-old niece on a sketching trip to the mountains of West Virginia.

In the early 1900s Sharpe had a studio on the top floor of her parents' home in Morton Place and became well known for her studio parties. She worked in Brown County, in Brookville, and on Traverse Bay in Michigan. She also became much interested in designing bookplates.

Julia Sharpe was a loyal member and a guardian of the history of the Second Presbyterian Church and the Home for Aged Women (now Indianapolis Retirement Home (M 0519), and of the DAR (Caroline Scott Harrison Chapter). She was a fluent writer, and gave readings to many organizations, often in dialect in the style of J. W. Riley and Bret Harte. She never married but lived with her parents and then with her two sisters, Ella Sharpe Duncan and Anna T. Sharpe.

Sources:

Materials in collection, especially artist's notebook.

Personal knowledge of processor Charles Latham.

Esther Griffin White, *Indiana Bookplates* (1911), unpagged

*New Era*, 25 May 1912, 10

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains correspondence, literary compositions, photographs, graphics, sketches, and sketchbooks, dated 1878–1932. It is arranged by category, and chronologically within category.

**Series 1** contains correspondence, notes, and poems. Of particular interest are notes from Indiana painter John W. Love (Folder 4) and from James Whitcomb Riley (Folders 5–8); poems of admiration from William Forsyth (Folder 9). In folder 10 there is a copy of A Child-World by James W. Riley (1897) inscribed by William Forsyth to Julia and includes a poem by Forsyth, Oct. 1896. Letters written by Julia Sharpe while studying at the Art Students League are in (Folders 12–14); a 1907 letter from Selma N. Steele describing the new Steele house in Brown County, and two letters of 1911 about a contested election at the Art Institute (Folder 15); World War I letters from Indianapolis protégé Winant P. Johnston and French soldiers (Folders 16–19). Folder 20 includes a letter with reminiscences about studying under William Merritt Chase, and letters from Henry Lane Wilson, George Ade, and Albert J. Beveridge. (Note: photographs of two of the J. W. Riley letters in Folder 5, and of the items in Folders 6 and 7 are found in M 0240 J. W. Riley, Box 1 Folder 20.)

**Series 2** contains dialect stories, and a notebook with short portraits of important acquaintances and some club papers. There are also two Julia Sharpe sketchbooks. One, with sharp pencil sketches dated 1878–1881, shows the meticulous technique taught at the Love-Gookins art school (Folder 11). The other, in Folder 12 and dated 1894–1896, dates from the Forsyth-Steele school and has sketches done in a much broader style. There are also three female heads, one of an old woman in spectacles dated from West Virginia in 1898, and a sketch (1902) of and note (1906) from H & M. Nodder.

BV 3061 is a studio scrapbook, with Sharpe's tickets to different art schools, clippings, copies, and original drawings of bookplates, and photographs of some paintings. BV 3062 is a scrapbook kept from 1880 on by her sister Anna T. Sharpe contains mainly newspaper poetry, some social notices, and an obituary of John W. Love, who died young in 1880.

**Series 3** contains photographs of Mme D'Hervilly of the Chegaray Institute; Julia Sharpe and her studio; her family's house in Morton Place; and photographs of some of her paintings with her descriptions. There are two unbound albums in the photographs box of the Brookeville area. There are also three photograph albums with images of the classes at the Art Students League, sketching scenes in Brown County, at Cedar Farm, and in West Virginia and Michigan. A small album of photographs of the studio Sharpe maintained from 1917 to 1920 in her brother's home at 1314 North Delaware Street. Also included is an unbound album, decorated by Sharpe with photographs of her niece, Josephine P. Sharpe, with her parents, J. K. Sharpe, Jr., and Alberta J. Sharpe.

## SERIES CONTENTS

### Series 1: Biographical Information and Correspondence, 1879–1935

| CONTENTS  | CONTAINER        |
|---|------------------|
| Biographical information on Julia Graydon Sharpe, typed 2 pages   | Box 1, Folder 1  |
| History of JGS prepared by DAR Chapter, handwritten 7 pages   | Box 1, Folder 2  |
| Material about Henry Ward Beecher in Indianapolis including newspaper articles, a handwritten document for Second Presbyterian Church and nine images of HWB including one with his sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe | Box 1, Folder 3  |
| Correspondence 1879–1900 including six handwritten letters and one typed. Includes letters of admiration, business, the death of her father, and one written in French.   | Box 1, Folder 4  |
| Notes from James Whitcomb Riley 1884–1895, 7 handwritten notes regarding invitations to events.   | Box 1, Folder 5  |
| Poem written by Riley requested by JGS and read at a Flower Mission event, n.d.   | Box 1, Folder 6  |
| Sketch of the character Doc Sifers and poem from Riley, 1900  | Box 1, Folder 7  |
| Newspaper article (1935) and note from JGS on sketch in Folder 7  | Box 1, Folder 8  |
| Twelve poems from William Forsyth (1888–1899) expressing his admiration for JGS, n.d.   | Box 1, Folder 9  |
| Book <u>A Child-World</u> by James Whitcomb Riley given to JGS by William Forsyth (1896) includes a poem by WF inside the front cover.  | Box 1, Folder 10 |
| Speech at Flower Mission, 1894  | Box 1, Folder 11 |
| Letters to family from New York: Apr.–Dec. 1896   | Box 1, Folder 12 |
| Letters to family from New York: Jan.–May 1897  | Box 1, Folder 13 |

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|---|------------------|
| Letters to family from West Virginia: Sept.–Oct. 1898   | Box 1, Folder 14 |
| Correspondence 1902–1917 includes a founders' certificate in the name of her sister, Anna for the Progressive Party, (1912)                                     | Box 1, Folder 15 |
| Letters from Winant P. Johnston (Georgia and France), Dec. 1917 – 6 Nov. 1918   | Box 1, Folder 16 |
| Letters from Winant P. Johnston (France and Germany), Nov. 1918 – March 1919  | Box 1, Folder 17 |
| Letters from Frances M. Ross in France, 1917–1918   | Box 1, Folder 18 |
| Letters from French soldiers, 1917–1918   | Box 1, Folder 19 |
| Correspondence to and from JGS, 1922–1932   | Box 1, Folder 20 |
| Informal Will: refers to a shadow which passed over the artist's life in childhood, 1924  | Box 1, Folder 21 |
| Valentine from Roswell M. Field, brother of Eugene Field to Julia G. Sharpe, Kansas City, includes a mounted manuscript poem with flowers drawn around it, n.d. | OM 0363          |

## **Series 2: Manuscripts; Sketchbooks and Drawings**

| CONTENTS   | CONTAINER       |
|--|-----------------|
| Manuscript: Fairies then and now; 17 pages handwritten; additional copy in composition book  | Box 2, Folder 1 |
| Manuscript: Jeff-- a desperate character; 51 pages handwritten in four parts; additional copy  | Box 2, Folder 2 |
| Manuscript: Just an old garden; 41 pages handwritten in composition book; additional typed copy; newspaper articles concerning old homes in Indianapolis | Box 2, Folder 3 |
| Manuscript: Mammy's victory 20 pages typed; 2 handwritten copies in composition books  | Box 2, Folder 4 |
| Manuscript: The Pommydory man 21 pages handwritten   | Box 2, Folder 5 |

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| Notebook on famous acquaintances including William Merritt Chase, George W. Childs, James Whitcomb Riley                                | Box 2, Folder 6                                 |
| Club Papers: 3 handwritten speeches by JGS; content includes information on Gotthold Lessing, David Livingstone, Bjorustyere Bjornason  | Box 2, Folder 7                                 |
| Tributes and memorials for Anna Nicholas, Mrs. Carrie Loveless, Mrs. Caleb S. Dewey written and presented by JGS                        | Box 2, Folder 8                                 |
| Newspaper clippings regarding Book of Regents, obituary of mother, marriage of sister, social news                                      | Box 2, Folder 9                                 |
| Loose items from scrapbook 1896–1923 includes copies of social news from newspaper, program and picture from Second Presbyterian Church | Box 2, Folder 10                                |
| JGS Scrapbook 1896–1923 includes newspaper articles, photos, art work, programs from special events, correspondence                     | BV 3061   |
| Sketchbook 1878–1881: pencil drawings of nature, people, landscapes   | Box 2, Folder 11                                |
| Sketchbook 1894–1896: pencil drawings of men, women and children  | Box 2, Folder 12                                |
| Ink sketches two heads ca. 1896 women in formal attire man in front of window   | Box 2, Folder 13                                |
| Ink sketch old lady's head (West Virginia), 1898  | Box 2, Folder 14                                |
| Sketch of H. M. Nodder 1902 and Note from Nodder 1906   | Box 2, Folder 15                                |
| Portrait of a young lady reading a book, charcoal on watermarked paper from the Indiana School of Art                                   | Oversize Graphics:<br>Flat File 3-f<br>Folder 1 |
| [Julia Graydon Sharpe self portrait]<br>charcoal on watermarked paper from the Indiana School of Art                                    | Oversize Graphics:<br>Flat File 3-f<br>Folder 2 |

Scrapbook of Anna Sharpe 1880: includes newspaper clippings of poems, social events, biographical sketches, family members

BV 3062

### **Series 3: Photographs, Albums, and Watercolor Painting**

#### CONTENTS

#### CONTAINER

Portrait photographs of JGS, 1880–1920

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 1

Interior photos JGS studio at 2111 N. Delaware St. Indianapolis, ca 1910

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 2

Joseph K. Sharpe house at 2111 N. Delaware St. interior and exterior gardens, ca 1910, 8 photographs

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 3

Photographs of paintings that were laid in BV 3061 gardens and landscapes

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 4

Photographs of Mme D'Hervilly of the Chegaray Institute, unidentified young woman, and a dog

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 5

Album: Brookville Indiana 1917, includes cabins, homes, roads, rivers, courthouse, residents (folder 1 of 2)

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 6

Album: Brookville Indiana 1917, includes interior and exterior views of The Hermitage, roads, rivers, homes churches, flood waters (folder 2 of 2)

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 7

Photographs of Cedar Grove Metamora Whitewater River , includes Brookville main street, homes, residents

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 8

Exterior photo of farmhouse in West Virginia, 1898

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 9

Watercolor of farmhouse and landscape in West Virginia 1898

OVB Graphics:  
Folder 1

Group photograph of men and women; JGS seated in front row to the left with hand to her ear, ca 1880

OVB Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 1

Group of five women at Flower Mission Fair in atrium area: JGS standing at left, ca 1910

OVB Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 1

Henry Latham house at 947 North Meridian Street,  
two-story house with fenced yard

Album: Studios and travels, 1896: photos of Art  
Students League studios New York, homes,  
landscapes, and individuals throughout Indiana,  
Kentucky, Ohio, Maine, and Michigan

Album: Sable Studio; handwritten description of 4  
room studio 7 photos of studio with descriptions;  
reproduction of print of JGS by F. A. Hetherington

Album: Decorated Photograph Album, ca. 1900  
portraits of Julia's niece Josephine from infancy to  
young girlhood; hand painted flowers and scrolls  
adorn the pages

OVB Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 2

PAB Album Storage:  
Album 1

PAB Album Storage:  
Album 2

PAC Album Storage:  
Album 3