

University of Mary Washington

A Guide to the Jean Slater Edson Papers

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

University of Mary Washington Special Collections and University Archives

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Summary Information

- Repository:** University of Mary Washington Special Collections and University Archives
- Creator:** Edson, Jean Slater
- Title:** Jean Slater Edson Papers
- Identifier:** MSS.0009
- Date:** 1929-1984
- Physical Description:** 3 Linear Feet (2 upright legal-size document boxes (Box 1 and 2) and one flat storage box (Box 3). All oversize material is located in Box 3.)

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The first documented instance of a donation to this collection was on May 19, 1971, when Mary Washington College associate professor Jean Slater Edson donated recital programs as well as her organ arrangement of the University of Mary Washington's "Alma Mater." The next series of donations occurred about ten years later and were given by Barbara Alden, Jean Slater Edson's friend and MWC's archivist at the time. On May 16, 1983, Alden donated some letters addressed to her from Mrs. Slater Edson; on November 01, 1984, she donated a revised score of Jean Slater Edson's original piece "From Age to Age"; and then on September 23, 1985, shortly after Mrs. Slater Edson's passing, she donated more correspondence.

There exists correspondence dated August 16, 1999, where James Baker, the then conductor of the Mary Washington College and Community Orchestra, writes about how he would like to donate some "materials (original music compositions [of Edson's]... [that] came my way from the basement of Dr. G. C. Simpson."

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in 5 series: 1) Musical Compositions, 2) Correspondence, 3) Printed Materials, 4) Unpublished Materials, and 5) Audio-Visual and Ephemera. The bulk of the collection consists of Professor Edson's written music, which has been arranged into sub-series to reflect the nature of the compositions and instrumentation.

Material is arranged alphabetically except in a few instances where arrangement by date was more appropriate.

Biographical / Historical

Jean Slater Edson was an associate professor of music and physics at Mary Washington College, which has since been renamed the University of Mary Washington. Born on December 22, 1906, as Jean Appel, she grew to be equally interested in science and music. This passion led her to pursue both topics in higher education. Jean Slater began her education by obtaining a liberal arts degree from Vassar College, a Bachelor of Music with a minor in both science and math. From there, she pursued a Master of Arts of Music at Columbia University, where she also studied physics and earned a music fellowship abroad in Vienna, Austria. Jean Slater became Associate Professor of Music at Mary Washington College in 1947. After her first thirteen years of teaching there, she was additionally hired as a part-time professor of physics. Later, she would evenly split her time between her organ studio and physics labs at MWC. During her time at MWC, she married Andrew W. Edson and garnered the name that she would be known

by today and in history: Jean Slater Edson. Likewise, some accounts and records of her refer to her as “Mrs. Andrew W. Edson,” denoting her status as married. Despite teaching at MWC, Edson was also an active member of the American Guild of Organists, which she held an Associate Degree and a Choir Master degree within. She retired from teaching at MWC in 1972 and died due to declining health on September 19, 1985.

In addition to her research for physics, Edson also researched music and wrote composition pieces of a large variety. Her most well-known non-composition work is her book, *Organ Preludes: An Index to Compositions on Hymn Tunes, Chorales, Plainsong Melodies, Gregorian Tunes, and Carols*. Edson wrote this with other organ players, like herself, in mind; she wanted other organists to have a good reference to the vast world of the instrument’s repertoire. Her book outlines and cross-indexes over 3,000 different organ pieces for this purpose, and it was published by Scarecrow Press in 1970. Regarding compositional music, her two most popular pieces among the Fredericksburg community are those that she dedicated to Dr. Grellet C. Simpson, MWC Chancellor from 1956 to 1974. The first one titled “Fanfare on G.C.S.” for organ was composed for Dr. Simpson’s inauguration, and the other one, titled “From Age to Age” for women’s choir and organ, was composed for the tenth-year anniversary of his position. Other notable compositions by her include “Missa Universalis,” a work for men’s choir, solo baritone, and organ that was commissioned and premiered by the Dartmouth College Glee Club, which had nearly fifty members at that time.

Sources:

MWC Today. “In Memory of Jean Slater Edson.” Winter 1986, 10. Accessed October 30, 2020.

U of Mary Washington.

The Bullet. “MW College Will Offer Physics Major Next Year.” February 19, 1960, 5. Accessed

October 30, 2020. U of Mary Washington

The Bullet. “Mrs. Edson is Composer.” November 16, 1963, 3. Accessed October 30, 2020. U of Mary Washington

Scope and Contents

The Jean Slater Edson papers span 3 boxes that contain her original music manuscripts, programs or news clippings that she was featured in, correspondence regarding her personal life and music, a vinyl of her original music, and other miscellaneous items that pertain to her. The dated materials span 1929 to 1984. Although the majority of her compositions are undated, most of her dated works were created during her time as a teacher at Mary Washington College. Additionally, most correspondence and publications in this collection are in reference to the publishing process for some of Jean Slater Edson’s musical works while she was residing in the Northern Virginia/DC area.

Of particular interest is a collection of letters written by her while she was conducting research across Europe to complete her *Organ Preludes* publication. These letters are addressed to both the family of MWC’s former Chancellor, Dr. Simpson, and MWC’s first archivist, Barbara Alden, and they document her journey through Germany, Denmark, and England. Some other items that are of note are the score and papers surrounding her large-scale work *Missa Universalis*, which include correspondence, a performance program, a newspaper article, and various other documents that denote Jean Slater Edson’s creative process for the piece as well as its public reception.

Language of Materials

Contains songs written in German, French, and Russian.

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Controlled Access Headings

- Composition (Music)
- Keyboard instrument music, Arranged
- Musicals
- Organ music, Arranged
- Simpson, Grellet C., 1909-1997

Collection Inventory

Musical Compositions, 1929-1986

Identifier: 1

Choral, 1944-1977

Identifier: 1

“Battle Hymn of the Republic,” arr. Jean Slater Edson

Box 1; Folder 1 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

“Blessed Jesus (Opening of Service),” arr. Jean Slater Edson, 1949

Box 1; Folder 2 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 2

“Entreat Me Not to Leave Thee”, 1944

Box 1; Folder 3 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 3

“God of Our Life”, 1965

Box 1; Folder 4 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 4

“Great Sons of God”, 1954

Box 1; Folder 5 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 5

"Greetings"	Box 1; Folder 6 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 6	
"I Hear America Singing"	Box 1; Folder 7 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 7	
"Integer Vitae"	Box 1; Folder 8 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 8	
"Litanies"	Box 1; Folder 9 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 9	
"Lo, Here Is Felawschipe"	Box 1; Folder 10 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 10	
"Lullaby of the Virgin Mary", 1953	Box 1; Folder 11 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 11	
"Lullaby of the Virgin Mary" & "Noel (Introit)", 1966	Box 1; Folder 12 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 12	
Noel (Introit)", 1951	Box 1; Folder 13 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 13	
"Now Praise We Great and Famous Men," arr. Jean Slater Edson, 1949	Box 1; Folder 14 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 14	
"O Brother Man," arr. Jean Slater Edson	Box 1; Folder 15 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 15	
"O God Stretch Forth Thy Mighty Hand," arr. Jean Slater Edson, 1957, 1958	Box 1; Folder 16 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 16	

“O Sons and Daughters,” arr. Jean Slater Edson, 1960

Box 1; Folder 17 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 17

"Peace I Leave with You"

Box 3; Folder 1 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 18

"Praise to the Lord," arr. Jean Slater Edson, 1949

Box 1; Folder 18 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 19

"Psalm 117"

Box 3; Folder 2 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 20

"Song of the Northwest Wind"

Box 1; Folder 19 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 21

“This is the Day the Lord Hath Made,” arr. Jean Slater Edson

Box 1; Folder 20 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 22

"To Be Sung"

Box 1; Folder 21 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 23

"To Music"

Box 1; Folder 22 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 24

Untitled

Box 1; Folder 23 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 25

"Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones," arr. Jean Slater Edson, 1949

Box 1; Folder 24 (Mixed Materials)

Instrumental

Identifier: 2

“Adagio and Scherzo for Woodwinds”

Box 1; Folder 25 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

“Adagio for Small Orchestra”

Box 1; Folder 26 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 2

"Ars Festiva (Camus)"

Box 1; Folder 27 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 3

"Elegie"

Box 1; Folder 28 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 4

“Scherzo for Woodwinds”

Box 3; Folder 3 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 5

Operettas and Stage Plays

Identifier: 3

"Joie de Vivre"

Box 3; Folder 4 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

Untitled Two-Act

Box 1; Folder 29 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 2

Keyboard

Identifier: 4

"Be Thou My Vision"

Box 1; Folder 30 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

"The Breakers"

Box 3; Folder 5 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 2

"Children's Suite"

Box 1; Folder 31 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 3

“Death Wind (The Call of the Will-o-the-Wisps)”

Box 1; Folder 32 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 4

Fanfare on 'G.C.S.' [Grellet C. Simpson]", 1956

Box 1; Folder 33 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 5

"Fantasie" for organ

Box 1; Folder 34 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 6

"Fantasie" for piano

Box 1; Folder 35 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 7

"Fantasy on a Given Motive"

Box 3; Folder 6 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 8

"Folk Suite for organ"

Box 1; Folder 36 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 9

"Fugue in G Minor", 1929

Box 1; Folder 37 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 10

"Gaudeamus Igitur (Academic Procession)"

Box 1; Folder 38 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 11

"Mary Washington College Alma Mater," arr. Jean Slater Edson

Box 1; Folder 39 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 12

"Minuet" (for piano or string trio)

Box 1; Folder 40 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 13

"Jeg er så glad hver julekveld (Norwegian Christmas song)"

Box 1; Folder 41 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 14

"Phrygian Cortege"

Box 1; Folder 42 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 15

"Prelude" 1	Box 3; Folder 7 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 16	

"Prelude" 2	Box 1; Folder 43 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 17	

"Prelude on Old 107th"	Box 1; Folder 44 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 18	

"Reverie"	Box 1; Folder 45 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 19	

"Russian River-Song"	Box 1; Folder 46 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 20	

"Sarabande"	Box 1; Folder 47 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 21	

"Scherzo for Organ"	Box 1; Folder 48 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 22	

"Sonata No. 1 in E major"	Box 3; Folder 8 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 23	

"Suite for Piano"	Box 1; Folder 49 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 24	

"Thema und Variations (für Orgel)"	Box 3; Folder 9 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 25	

"Three Voice Fugue for Piano"	Box 3; Folder 10 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 26	

"Variations of the Sigma Alpha Iota Chorale"

Box 1; Folder 50 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 27

"(Wedding) Prelude"

Box 1; Folder 51 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 28

"Wie ist es möglich dann"

Box 1; Folder 52 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 29

Solos, 1949-1980

Identifier: 5

"Aspiration"

Box 2; Folder 1 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

"Cossack Folk Tune"

Box 2; Folder 2 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 2

"Dedication"

Box 2; Folder 3 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 3

"Fantasie" for cello and piano

Box 2; Folder 4 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 4

"From a Coral Island"

Box 3; Folder 11 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 5

"I Belong to You"

Box 2; Folder 5 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 6

"It Cannot Was (A Folk Lament)", 1958

Box 2; Folder 6 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 7

"Like Summer Rain"	Box 2; Folder 7 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 8	

"Love Song of a Lunatic", 1980	Box 2; Folder 8 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 9	

"Le Parapluie de ma Tante," transcribed, Jean Slater Edson, 1949	Box 2; Folder 9 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 10	

"Lullaby for Fay," typeset, Jean Slater Edson	Box 2; Folder 10 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 11	

"Requiem for a Lost Love"	Box 2; Folder 11 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 12	

"She is so Sweet" & "Song of Mary"	Box 2; Folder 12 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 13	

"Sonata for Cello"	Box 3; Folder 12 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 14	

"Three German Folk Songs	Box 2; Folder 13 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 15	

"To Washington We Sing", 1951	Box 2; Folder 14 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 16	

Untitled collection, 1944	Box 2; Folder 15 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 17	

"Wheeling Wings"	Box 3; Folder 13 (Mixed Materials)
Identifier: 18	

Multiple Arrangements, 1946-1986

Identifier: 6

"Alleluia"

Box 2; Folder 16 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

"Babe of Bethlehem", 1946, 1949, n.d.

Box 2; Folder 17 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 2

"Brothers All"

Box 2; Folder 18 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 3

"From Age to Age", 1984, n.d.

Box 2; Folder 19 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 4

"Missa Universalis"

Box 2; Folder 20 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 5

"Night Stuff"

Box 3; Folder 14 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 6

"Passion Chorale"

Box 3; Folder 15 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 7

"Schlafe, schlafe still mein Kind", 1951, n.d.

Box 2; Folder 21 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 8

"Short Requiem"

Box 2; Folder 22 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 9

"Will You Waltz?"

Box 2; Folder 23 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 10

Correspondence, 1957-1999

Identifier: 2

Christmas letters, 1967, 1972-1983

Box 2; Folder 24 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

Curry, W. Lawrence , 1964

Box 2; Folder 25 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 2

Demarest, Alison, 1960, 1964

Box 2; Folder 26 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 3

Simpson, Grellet C., 1956-1970

Box 2; Folder 27 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 4

Zeller, Paul, 1960-1963

Box 2; Folder 28 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 5

Miscellaneous, 1959-1984

Box 2; Folder 29 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 6

Printed Materials, 1948-1978

Identifier: 3

Articles published by Edson, 1971-1978

Box 2; Folder 30 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

Newspaper clippings, 1951-1970

Box 2; Folder 31 (Mixed Materials)

Performance programs, 1948-1980

Box 2; Folder 32 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 3

Promotional materials for Organ Preludes, 1970-1974

Box 2; Folder 33 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 4

Miscellaneous, 1961-1971

Box 3; Folder 16 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 5

Unpublished Materials

Identifier: 4

Copyright application, 1980

Box 2; Folder 34 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

Manuscript, "Beethoven's Use of Contrast, Particularly Dynamic, in the Seventh Symphony"

Box 2; Folder 35 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 2

Miscellaneous manuscript material and notes

Box 2; Folder 36 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 3

Audio-Visual and Ephemera

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

The library is not equipped with the appropriate technology to play the record or to transfer to digital. At this time, the record in this series is available only as an artifact and cannot be used as intended.

Identifier: 5

Photos, 1932

Box 2; Folder 37 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 1

Vinyl record, "A Short Requiem", Feb. 8, 1953

Box 3; Folder 17 (Mixed Materials)

General

Noted on record: "National Presbyterian Church Choir. Theodore Schaefer, Conductor. Paul Callaway, Organist. At Washington Cathedral."

Identifier: 2

Miscellaneous ephemera

Box 2; Folder 38 (Mixed Materials)

Identifier: 3