

Yale University Library  
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

# Guide to the Mabel Dodge Luhan and Family Papers

YCAL MSS 1555



by Brooke McManus

July 2023

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 1555

**CREATOR:** Luhan, Mabel Dodge, 1879-1962, author

**TITLE:** Mabel Dodge Luhan and family papers

**DATES:** circa 1900-1967

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 10.10 linear feet (11 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** In English, with a small amount of material in Arabic and Hebrew.

**SUMMARY:** The collection contains correspondence, writings, printed material, photographs and other papers by or relating to American arts patron and writer Mabel Dodge Luhan, her son, government official and author John G. Evans, and his wife, author Claire Spencer.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.luhanfamily>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.luhanfamily>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from the James Arsenault & Company on the Alfred Z. Baker, Jr. Fund, 2019.

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### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

## Conditions Governing Use

The Mabel Dodge Luhan and Family Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

Mabel Dodge Luhan and Family Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

This collection received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and minimal organization. Information included in the Description of Papers note and Collection Contents section is drawn from information supplied with the collection and from an initial survey of the contents. Folder titles appearing in the contents list below are often based on those provided by the creator or previous custodian. Titles have not been verified against the contents of the folders in all cases. Otherwise, folder titles are supplied by staff during initial processing.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

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## Associated Materials

Mabel Dodge Luhan Papers (YCAL MSS 196). Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Mabel Dodge Luhan Collection (YCAL MSS 197). Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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## Mabel Dodge Luhan (1879-1962)

Mabel Dodge Luhan was a major cultural figure in the United States in the first half of the 20th century. She is best known as a patron of the arts and writer, author of a multi-volume autobiographical work and books on D. H. Lawrence, Taos, and Taos area artists.

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## John G. Evans (1902-1978)

John Ganson Evans was an American government official and author. He was born in Buffalo, New York to Mabel Dodge Luhan and Karl Evans and attended Yale University in 1920-1921. Evans married his second wife, Claire Spencer, in 1933. From 1942 to 1943, Evans was assistant project director of the American concentration camp in Poston, Arizona known as the Colorado War Relocation Center. He served as general superintendent of the United Pueblos Agency (now Southern Pueblos Agency) in Albuquerque, New Mexico from 1944 to 1946. Evans subsequently worked as a foreign aid official, including positions as director of the Joint U.S.-Iran Commission on Rural Improvement, deputy director of United States Technical Cooperation Administration (TCA) mission to Iran in 1951-1952, and briefly, deputy director

of the TCA mission to Israel in 1953. He was appointed chief of the Egypt-Jordan Division in the Foreign Operations Administration in Washington, D.C. in 1953 and chief of the Near East Division in 1955. Evans published two novels, *Andrews' Harvest* (1933) and *Shadows Flying* (1936).

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## Claire Spencer (1899-1987)

Claire Spencer Evans was born in Glasgow, Scotland and emigrated to the United States in 1915. She was a painter, actor, and author whose novels included *Gallows' Orchard* (1930), *The Quick and the Dead* (1932), and *The Island* (1935). After divorcing her first husband, publisher Harrison Smith, Spencer married John Evans in 1933. She had four children from both marriages.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of correspondence, writings, printed material, photographs and other papers by or relating to American arts patron and writer Mabel Dodge Luhan, her son, government official and author John G. Evans, and his wife, author Claire Spencer.

Mabel Dodge Luhan papers contain of a draft of her unpublished memoir "Mexico in 1930," correspondence, family photographs, and an agreement related to Villa Curonia, Luhan's home with her second husband, Edwin Dodge.

John G. Evans papers primarily document his career as a writer and government official. Included are drafts of his novels *Andrews' Harvest* and *Shadows Flying* and related correspondence from Dorothy Brett, Una and Robinson Jeffers, Blanche Knopf, Elsie Clews Parsons, and other friends and publishing figures. Material concerning Evans's work at the Poston concentration camp in Arizona during World War II consists of correspondence, memoranda, and a chart of the camp's administrative organization, created by anthropologist Edward H. Spicer. Letters from War Relocation Authority Director Dillon S. Myer and sociologist John Collier discuss strikes by incarcerated Japanese Americans at Poston and the Tule Lake concentration camp. Papers related to Evans's tenure as general superintendent of the United Pueblos Agency (now Southern Pueblos Agency) in Albuquerque, New Mexico include letters from Truxton Canyon Agency Superintendent John O. Crow (Cherokee, or Aniyvwiya), Commissioner of Indian Affairs William A. Brophy, and Department of the Interior Secretary Julius A. Krug. A small amount of material relates to a proposal by nine New Mexico Pueblos to the United Nations to provide grain to European and Asian nations suffering from postwar famine. Papers concerning Evans's work with American foreign assistance programs in Iran and Israel consist of correspondence, photographs, government and financial documents, and printed material and ephemera. Included are several photograph albums of Iran. The collection also contains a photograph of Evans by Ansel Adams and a photograph of two Taos men on horseback by John Collier, Jr.

Claire Spencer papers consist of drafts of published and unpublished novels, among them *Gallows' Orchard* and *The Quick and the Dead*, and a few photographs, including a portrait by Berenice Abbott.

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## Arrangement

Organized into three series: I. Mabel Dodge Luhan Papers, circa 1900-1951. II. John G. Evans Papers, 1916-1967. III. Claire Spencer Papers, circa 1910s-1930s.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Mabel Dodge Luhan Papers, circa 1900-1951

0.21 linear feet (1 box)

This series contains drafts of Mabel Dodge Luhan's unpublished memoir "Mexico in 1930" and an account of Mexico by her husband Tony Luhan, as well as correspondence with Luhan's son John G. Evans. Also included are photographs of Luhan, her first husband Karl Evans, John G. Evans, Luhan's house in Taos, New Mexico, and her dog.

Materials maintain order found at time of acquisition.

b. 1, f. 1-3	"Whirling around Mexico" [working title for "Mexico in 1930"], chapters 4, 6-20, draft, autograph manuscript	circa 1930
b. 1, f. 4-5	"Mexico in 1930," chapters 6-20, draft, typescript	circa 1930
b. 1, f. 6	Tony's account ["Mexico in 1930"], drafts, autograph manuscript and typescript	circa 1930
b. 1, f. 7	Mabel Dodge Luhan and John G. Evans correspondence	circa 1929-1935
b. 1, f. 8	Draft agreement between Edwin Dodge and Sarah Reeder regarding Villa Curonia	1915
b. 1, f. 9	James T. Babb letter to Mabel Dodge Luhan Acknowledging gift of Marsden Hartley's "Portrait of Berlin" to Yale University.	1951
b. 1, f. 10	Photographs Photographers include Mildred Tolbert and George Platt Lynes.	circa 1900-1940s

**Series II: John G. Evans Papers, 1916-1967***8.68 linear feet (8 boxes)*

This series consists of writings, correspondence, government papers, photographs, and printed material by or relating to John G. Evans. Writings contain drafts of his two published novels, *Andrews' Harvest* and *Shadows Flying*, as well as poems by Evans. Also included is a scrapbook related to *Andrews' Harvest* and correspondence with friends and publishers regarding *Shadows Flying*. The series additionally contains materials documenting his work at the Poston concentration camp and November 1942 strike by Japanese American incarcerated; Evans's resignation as superintendent of the United Pueblos Agency; his positions with the United States Technical Cooperation Administration missions to Iran and Israel; and his appointment to the newly established U.S. Foreign Operations Administration in Washington, D.C. Photographs include two albums depicting Iranian people, agriculture, and Evans at work in Iran, as well as a few portraits of Evans and Taos men.

Materials maintain order found at time of acquisition.

b. 2, f. 11-12	<i>Andrews' Harvest</i> , draft, typescript, corrected	circa 1933
b. 4	<i>Andrews' Harvest</i> scrapbook Includes letters from playwright Lynn Riggs; publishers Blanche Knopf, Alfred Harcourt, and Thayer Hobson; poets Witter Bynner and Robinson Jeffers; anthropologist Elsie Clews Parsons; writer Mary Austin; music critic Philip Hale; newspaper editor Arthur Brisbane; arts patron Noël Sullivan; critic Louis Kronenberger; and journalist Hutchins Hapgood, who writes about an encounter with Ernest Hemingway. A few letters and telegrams concern the sale of the movie rights for <i>Andrews' Harvest</i> . The scrapbook also contains a number of newspaper and magazine clippings.	1933
b. 2, f. 13-14	<i>Runyon's Paradise</i> [working title for <i>Shadows Flying</i> ], typescript draft sent to Alfred Knopf	circa 1936
b. 2, f. 15-16	<i>Runyon's Sister</i> [working title for <i>Shadow's Flying</i> ], typescript draft sent to Wm Morrow & Co.	circa 1936
b. 2, f. 17	Personal correspondence regarding <i>Shadows Flying</i> Correspondents include artist Dorothy Brett, family friend Una Jeffers, and Natalie Scott, an author, social worker, and Red Cross nurse.	1935-1936
b. 2, f. 18	Publishing correspondence regarding <i>Shadows Flying</i>	1935
b. 2, f. 19-20	Poems, autograph manuscript and typescript Includes a few unrelated documents, including description of a farm in Maine and hand-drawn layout of a house.	1916-1936
b. 5	Leather folio Folio in which poems in Box 2, f. 19-20 were formerly enclosed.	undated
b. 2, f. 21	Poston concentration camp	1942-1944
b. 9, f. 61	Poston concentration camp organizational chart by Edward H. Spicer Chart is primarily in English, with some terms in Japanese.	1942-1944

b. 2, f. 22-23	United Pueblos Agency Includes letters from Pueblos Bartolo Montoya (Isleta) and Ernest M. Yasteya (Laguna); Dr. Manuel Gamio, director of the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano (in Spanish, with an English translation); Helen P. Bradley Henry; Department of Interior colleagues John O. Crow (Cherokee, or Aniyvwiya), William A. Brophy, Julius A. Krug, future Supreme Court Justice Abraham Fortas (then Undersecretary of the Interior), and Ward Shepard; and Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union. Several clippings and letters concern the offer of corn and wheat by nine New Mexico Pueblos to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration for European and East Asian nations affected by postwar famine. Also contains Evans's proposal to the Isleta people respecting selection of a governor, his statement to the Albuquerque Indian School and Santa Fe Indian School classes of 1946, and a copy of his resignation letter from the agency.	1944-1946
b. 2, f. 24	Rural improvement, Iran	1951-1952
b. 3, f. 25	Iran and Israel	1952-1953
b. 3, f. 26	"Tehran and overlapping material re Tel Aviv transfer"	1953
b. 3, f. 27	Point Four / Technical Cooperation Administration, Israel [and overlapping material regarding D.C. transfer]	1953-1954
b. 3, f. 28	"Tel Aviv - Personal material"	1953
b. 3, f. 29	"Tel Aviv - Invitations, gifts, notes of congratulations, etc."	1953
b. 3, f. 30	"Miscellaneous letters, etc. 1947-1951" Primarily Department of Interior memoranda and correspondence respecting Evans's 1944 appointment as superintendent of the United Pueblos Agency and his resignation in 1946; the Technical Cooperation Administration program in Israel; and other matters. Includes a biographical statement by Evans and letter from War Relocation Authority Director Dillon S. Myer respecting the Poston concentration camp strike.	1943-1951
b. 3, f. 31	Hotel bills - Middle East, England	1950s
b. 3, f. 32	"Tickets" [hotel bills and travel documents]	1951-1953
b. 3, f. 33-34	Foreign Operations Administration appointments	1954-1955
b. 3, f. 35	Foreign Operations Administration payroll slips, travel documents and vouchers	1954-1955
b. 3, f. 36	"Democracy and Reality," draft, typescript	1941
b. 3, f. 37	"The Journal of Stephen Leigh," draft, typescript, corrected	undated
b. 3, f. 38	Unidentified correspondence	circa 1946, undated
b. 3, f. 39	Clipping, biographical note	1946-1953
b. 3, f. 40	Unidentified autograph manuscript writings and notes on <i>Gallows' Orchard</i> in unknown hand	circa 1930s
b. 3, f. 41	Printed material and ephemera	1935-1944



## Photographs

b. 6, f. 45	Iran photograph album - covers Front cover is hand-painted (possibly acrylic).	1952
b. 7, f. 46-60	Iran photograph album - pages removed from	1952
b. 8	Iran photograph album Interior cover reads: "To John G. Evans from his friends in T.C.J."	1952-1953
b. 3, f. 42	Iran photograph album - loose photos Includes several photos from Israel.	1952-1953
b. 3, f. 43	Evans in a cowboy hat, smoking a cigarette, Taos, New Mexico, by Ansel Adams Signed by Adams on the recto.	1929
b. 3, f. 44	Evans in costume at Isadora Duncan's dance school Signed by Evans on the recto.	circa 1925-1926
b. 9, f. 62	Evans and Eliseo Concha, Taos, New Mexico Concha was a Taos carpenter. "Edwin T. Evans' grandchildren" is written on the verso.	circa 1960
b. 9, f. 63	Two unidentified Taos men on horseback by John Collier, Jr.	circa 1967

**Series III: Claire Spencer Papers, circa 1910s-1930s***1.21 linear feet (2 boxes)*

This series primarily consists of typescript drafts of *Gallows' Orchard*, *The Quick and the Dead*, unpublished works, and a few short stories by Claire Spencer, as well as a file of reviews for her novel *The Island*. Also included are a photograph of Spencer from a touring production of *Good Gracious, Annabel* and a portrait by Berenice Abbott, likely taken around the time Spencer published her first novel.

Materials maintain order found at time of acquisition.

b. 10, f. 65-66	<i>Gallows' Orchard</i> , draft, typescript, corrected	1930
b. 10, f. 67-68	<i>The Quick and the Dead</i> , draft, typescript, corrected	1932
b. 10, f. 69	Reviews of <i>The Island</i>	1935-1936
b. 10, f. 70-71	<i>For No Man</i> [working title of <i>Stark Major</i> ], draft, typescript, corrected	circa 1930s
b. 10, f. 72-73	<i>Stark Major</i> , complete typescript, corrected	circa 1930s
b. 10, f. 74-75	<i>Stark Major</i> , partial drafts	circa 1930s
b. 10, f. 76-79	<i>Landscape with Figures: A Novel</i> , complete typescripts, corrected	circa 1930s
b. 10, f. 80-83	<i>Landscape with Figures: A Novel</i> , partial drafts	circa 1930s
b. 11, f. 84-85	<i>Landscape with Figures: A Novel</i> , partial drafts	circa 1930s
b. 11, f. 86	Short stories: "Madge Gilson," "Aunt Mabel," "Walter"	circa 1930s
	Photographs	
b. 11, f. 87	Two portraits of Spencer	circa 1910s
b. 11, f. 88	Portrait of Spencer on tour in <i>Good Gracious, Annabel</i> by Hixon Connelly	1918
b. 9, f. 64	Portrait of Spencer by Berenice Abbott Signed by Abbott on the recto.	circa 1930

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## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### Geographic Names

Iran -- Pictorial works

### Occupations

Authors -- United States -- 20th Century

### Subjects

American literature -- 20th Century  
Authors, American -- 20th Century -- Archives  
Indians of North America -- New Mexico  
Japanese Americans -- Forced removal and internment, 1942-1945  
Pueblo Indians  
Pueblo Indians -- Government relations  
Taos Indians -- Portraits  
Technical assistance, American -- Iran  
Technical assistance, American -- Israel  
Women authors, American -- 20th Century  
World War, 1939-1945 -- Concentration camps -- Arizona -- Poston  
World War, 1939-1945 -- Concentration camps -- United States

### Genres / Formats

Photographs

### Names

Abbott, Berenice, 1898-1991  
Adams, Ansel, 1902-1984  
Brett, Dorothy, 1883-1977  
Brophy, William A. (William Aloysius), 1903-1962  
Collier, John, 1884-1968  
Collier, John, Jr., 1913-1992  
Crow, John O., 1912-1994  
Evans, John, 1902-  
Jeffers, Robinson, 1887-1962  
Jeffers, Una, 1884 or 1885-1950  
Knopf, Blanche W., 1894-1966  
Krug, Julius A. (Julius Albert), 1907-1970  
Luhan, Mabel Dodge, 1879-1962  
Myer, Dillon S. (Dillon Seymour), 1891-1982

Parsons, Elsie Worthington Clews, 1874-1941  
Spencer, Claire, 1899-  
Spicer, Edward Holland, 1906-1983

### Corporate Bodies

Poston Relocation Center (Ariz.)  
Tule Lake Relocation Center  
United States. Bureau of Indian Affairs.  
Southern Pueblos Agency  
United States. War Relocation Authority

### Contributors

Luhan, Mabel Dodge, 1879-1962 , author  
Evans, John, 1902- , author  
Spencer, Claire, 1899- , author