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Johnson, Georgia Douglas

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Biographical Sketch

Georgia Douglas Johnson

- 1877 Sept. 10 Born in Atlanta, Georgia to Laura (Jackson) Camp and George Camp.
- 1893 Graduated from Atlanta University's Normal School.
- 1902-03 Studied harmony, piano, voice, at Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Oberlin, Ohio.
- 1903 Married Henry Lincoln Johnson, an Atlanta attorney. Had two sons, Henry Lincoln Johnson, Jr. (1906) and Peter Douglas Johnson (1907).
- 1905 June Poems "Omnipresence" appeared in Voice of the Negro.
- 1910 Family moved to Washington D.C. Two years later, Henry Lincoln Johnson was appointed Recorder of Deeds by President William Howard Taft.
- 1916 Poems began to appear in Crisis magazine.
- 1918 First book of poems, The Heart of a Woman, was published.
- 1922 Bronze: A Book of Verse was published.
- 1924 Henry Lincoln Johnson died.
- 1925 Appointed by Calvin Coolidge as Commissioner of Conciliation for the Department of Labor, in recognition of her husband's contributions; served until 1934.
- n.d. Wrote columns "Homely Philosophy", "Wise Sayings; and "Beauty Hints" for several Black newspapers.
- 1926 "Blue Blood," a play, won Opportunity magazine's second prize.

- 1927 "Plumes," a play, won first prize in the
1927 Opportunity contest.
- 1928 An Autumn Love Cycle published.
1930 Organized a correspondence club, the "One
World" Washington Social Letter Club, which functioned
until 1965.
- 1962 Last book of poetry, Share My World, was
published.
- 1965 Received an honorary doctor of letters from
Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia.
- 1966 May 14 Died in Freedmen's Hospital, Washington, D.C.
after suffering a stroke.
- Sources: "Bibliographical Notes" found in, Shockley,
Ann A. Afro-American Women Writers, 1747-1933, G.K.
Hall and Co., 1988.
- Smith, Jessie Carney, ed., Notable Black
American Women, Gale Research, Inc., 1992.

SCOPE NOTE

The papers of Georgia Douglas Johnson, (1877-1966), poet, lyricist, essayist, playwright, novelist and musician, reflect her wide range of writing activities and her relationships with some of the literati of the "New Negro Renaissance." The bulk of these papers span the period from the 1930s to the 1960s. They consist primarily of drafts of poems and other writings, correspondence and a few photographs. The papers were recovered in 1992 from her former home which was undergoing extensive renovation at the time. The collection comprises 5 linear feet.

Georgia Douglas Johnson contributed greatly to the "New Negro Renaissance" by opening her residence at 1461 S Street, Northwest, Washington, D.C. as a literary salon. Nicknamed "Half-Way House", Mrs. Johnson's home became a weekly meeting place for writers such as Jean Toomer, Langston Hughes and William Stanley Braithwaite, to name a few. Among the correspondents in the collection are Toomer, Braithwaite, W.E.B. Du Bois, Zora Neale Hurston and Wallace Thurman.

The drafts of poems and other writings by Johnson are in both holograph and typescript form, and reflect the many modifications made in each draft. There are also writings under three different pseudonyms. These are included in the Writings by Johnson series, with the pseudonyms appearing in brackets.

The photographs include some striking portraits of Georgia Douglas Johnson, and possibly, one of her husband, Henry Lincoln Johnson. Also of interest is the photo of her 1893 graduating class at Atlanta University.

Series Description

Series A Personal Papers

Box 162-1 Includes biographical information; a list of those who visited her salon on a regular basis; and a few financial papers.

Series B Correspondence

Box 162-1 Includes correspondence from W.E.B. Du Bois, Jean Toomer, Bruce Fuller Warrick. Also includes her correspondence to various publishers and from other colleagues and proteges in the literary world. to 162-2 Nugent, and Meta

Series C Writings by Georgia D. Johnson

Box 162-2 These include notes, poems, plays, and song lyrics, which are arranged to 162-9 alphabetically by title. Among the poems are some dedicated to individuals and institutions. These are arranged alphabetically by name. The writings also include catalogs of published works. her

Series D Photographs

Box 162-10 This series is comprised of portraits of Georgia D. Johnson, her Atlanta University class of 1893, some organizational photos and unidentified acquaintances.

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Container List

A Personal Papers

Box	Folder
162-1	1 Biographical sketch
	2 Writings about Georgia D. Johnson
	3 Oberlin College receipt
	4 List of Salon attendees
	5 Georgia D. Johnson's new and interesting friends in and near Michigan
	6 Listing of greeting card recipients
	7 Publishers' rejection notices
minutes	8 Georgia D. Johnson personal writers' club
	9 Programs
	10 Henry Lincoln Johnson, Attorney-pamphlet
	11 Printed material-Big Blue Books Catalog
	12 Printed material-Rate book, no. 38, "The Negro Field"
	13 Clippings
	14 Address labels
	15 Financial papers
	16 Teaching notes of William Syphax
incomplete	17 Dover, Cedric, "A Thousand Tears,"
	18 Dover, Cedric, "Sun Gonna Shine"
	19 Dover, Cedric, "Trams in Calcutta"
	20 Du Bois, W.E.B., foreword
	21 Lucas, Grant, "To Georgia D. Johnson"
	22 McNair <u>Lura Thomas</u> , editor <u>Scimitar and Song</u> , Vol. 23, No. 7&8, 1951

B Correspondence

23	A
24	B
25	Braithwaite, William S.
26	C
27	D
28	Dover, Cedric
29	Du Bois, W. E. B.
30	E
31	F

- 32 Fauset, Jessie
- 33 Fuller, Meta Warrick

B Correspondence (cont'd)

Box	Folder
162-1	34 G
	35 Gale, Zona
	36 H-HU, 1942-1962
	37 Hurston, Zora Neale
	38 J
	39 K
	40 L
	41 Locke, Alain
	42 Lorraine, Lilith
	43 M
	44 Maran, Rene
	45 N
	46 Nugent, Bruce
	162-2
2 P	
3 Prattis, P.L.	
4 Q	
5 R	
6 S	
T	8 Thurman, Wallace
	9 Toomer, Jean
	10 U-Z
	11 First name only
	12 Correspondent unknown
	13 Unknown recipient
	14 Incomplete
	15 Other correspondents
	16 Envelopes

7

C Writings by Georgia D. Johnson

- 17 Catalogs of her writings
- 18 Tables of content
- 19 Notes
- 20 Notes
- 21 Notes
- 22 Notes
- 23 Notebooks
- 24 Notebook

- 25 Notes re: Bible
- 26 Notes re: Race
- 27 Notes re: prejudice
- 28 Notes, quotations
- 29 Notes, quotations

C Writings by Georgia D. Johnson (cont'd)

Box	Folder		
162-3	1	Notes re: Sympathy	
	2	Notes re: Tolerance	
	3	Notes re: Torch	
	4	Ann Leigh-World Woman	
	5	Brotherhood-Interracial Column	
	6	Blue Blood, a play	
	7	Come All Nations, Song lyrics	
	8	Friendship's Fires, Table of contents only	
	9	Hungry Man, short story (holograph)	10
Impact of Change on Community, Bethel, 1960			
	11	The Man to Be	
	12	[Memorial Day]	
	13	Memory	
	14	One World (additions), draft	
	15	Peter Johnson, MD., 1905- 1957	
16	Renowned Anthologist, Braithwaite, Dead		
	17	The Smile	
	18	A Statesman Is Born, chapter I	
	19	A Statesman Is Born, chapter II	
	20	A Statesman Is Born, chapter 16	
	21	A Statesman Is Born, various pages	
	22	Tomorrow's World, song lyrics	23
	"There's a Better Day a-Coming,"	song lyrics	24
	Sympathy, song lyrics		We All Need
	25	Incomplete typescripts	
	26	Book Reviews	
	27	[Malone, Johnson H.] To Decatur Street	
(pseudonym)			
	28	[Strong, Mary] Mary Strong Talks (pseudonym)	
	29	[Tremaine, John] "Paupaulekejo," a three-act	
play (pseudonym)			
	30	[Winston, Bessie Brent] The Hand That Touched	
the Cross (1 page only) (pseudonym)			

Poems

31	holograph untitled/illegible
32	holograph untitled/illegible
33	holograph untitled/illegible
34	holograph untitled/illegible
35	holograph untitled/illegible

- 36 holograph untitled/illegible
- 37 typescript drafts-untitled
- 38 typescript drafts-untitled
- 39 typescript drafts-untitled

Writings by Georgia D. Johnson (cont'd)

Box	Folder
	<u>Poems (cont'd)</u>
162-4	1 A-AF
	2 AG-AL
	3 AM-AT
	4 AU-AZ
poetry	5 An Autumn Love Cycle, published book of
	6 B-BE
	7 BEF-BI
	8 BJ-BLA
	9 BLB-BR
	10 BS-BZ
	11 C-CE
	12 CF-CH
	13 CI-COU
	14 CP-CZ
	15 D-DE
	16 DF-DZ
162-5	17 E-EL
	18 EM-ET
	19 EU-EZ
	20 F-FI
	21 FJ-FO
	22 FP-FZ
	23 G-GL
	24 GM-GZ
	25 H-HE
	26 Heart of a Woman, published book of poetry
27	HF-HZ
	28 I-I gaze
	29 I have-I want
	30 I was-I wonder
	31 I-IZ

Writings by Georgia D. Johnson (cont'd)

Box

Folder

Poems (cont'd)

162-6	1	J-JZ	
	2	K-KZ	
	3	L-LF	
	4	LG-LI	
	5	LJ-LZ	
	6	M-MD	
	7	ME-MI	
	8	MJ-MZ	
	9	N-NE	
		10	New Athenaeum, Summer, 1960
		11	NF-NO
		12	NP-NZ
		13	O-OL
		14	OM-ON
162-7	1	OP-OZ	
	2	P-PC	
	3	PE-PI	
	4	PJ-PL	
	5	PO	
		6	Poet's page <u>Crisis Magazine</u>
		7	PR-Q
		8	R-RC
		9	RE-RF
		10	RG-RZ
		11	S-SE
		12	SF-SN
		13	SO-SOR
		14	SP-SZ
		15	T-TH
162-8	1	TI	
	2	TO	
	3	TOA-TOY	
	4	TR-TRE	
	5	TRF-TZ	
	6	U-UZ	
	7	W-WE	
	8	WF-WH	

9 WI-WZ
10 Y-YZ

Writings by Georgia D. Johnson (cont'd)

Box

Folder

Dedicatory Poems

162-8

11 Atlanta University

12 B-J

13 K-M

14 N-S

15 T-Z

162-9

Folders with notations used by Mrs. Georgia D.
JohnsonD Photographs

162-10

1 Portraits of Georgia D. Johnson

2 Atlanta University Class of 1893

3 Henry Lincoln Johnson (?)

4 Henry Lincoln Johnson (?) in study

5 Elizabeth Johnson

6 Group in front of Dade's Buffet

7 National Association of Republican Women

8 Elks Convention

9 Unidentified Male