



Beyond Borders: The Selected Essays of Mary Austin

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Seventeen essays by Mary Hunter Austin (1868–1934), author of the western classic *The Land of Little Rain* (1903), demonstrate her wide-ranging interests and equally varied writing styles.

Although she was born in Carlinville, Illinois, and graduated from Blackburn College, Mary Austin spent most of her writing career in California, New York, and finally Sante Fe, New Mexico. A well-known, popular, and prolific writer, Austin published thirty-three books and three plays and was closely associated with many important literary figures of her time, including H. G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, Mabel Dodge Luhan, Jack London, and Willa Cather. Still best known today for her nature writing and southwestern cultural studies, Austin has been increasingly recognized for her work on feminist themes, including the play *The Arrow Maker*, the nonfiction *The Young Woman Citizen*, and the novels *A Woman of Genius* and *No. 26 Jayne Street*. What has been perhaps an overemphasis on Austin's nature writing has, since her death, eclipsed the fact that Austin was known during her lifetime as a colorful, eccentric, and controversial person whose direct and outspoken opinions engaged a wide variety of topics.

Beyond Borders demonstrates that variety. In addition to her monographs, Austin also published her short fiction and essays in periodicals. In fact, like many a writer earning a living from her work, Austin wrote prolifically for the magazine market, producing during her career over two hundred individual pieces published in over sixty periodicals. Although a collection of her short fiction appeared in 1987, Austin's nonfiction periodical work has remained uncollected until now.

In support of Austin's essays, Reuben J. Ellis provides an introduction that establishes a biographical and historical context for Austin's work. In addition, each Austin essay is prefaced by brief introductory remarks by the editor. A selected bibliography of Austin's essays is also included.

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