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Scandals of Justice Delayed: Revisiting Elizabeth Robins' Chronicles of Women's Suffrage Advocacy in the Time of Trump

SAMLA Conference 2020

Joanne E. Gates, Jacksonville State University

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Bio at the JSU English Department:

Dr. Gates teaches Women's Literature, Shakespeare, Computer Assisted Freshman Composition, and American and English Literature.

Her biography, *Elizabeth Robins, 1862-1952: Actress, Novelist, Feminist* (1994) won the Elizabeth Agee Award from the University of Alabama Press.

Dr. Gates is project director for [The Elizabeth Robins Web](#).

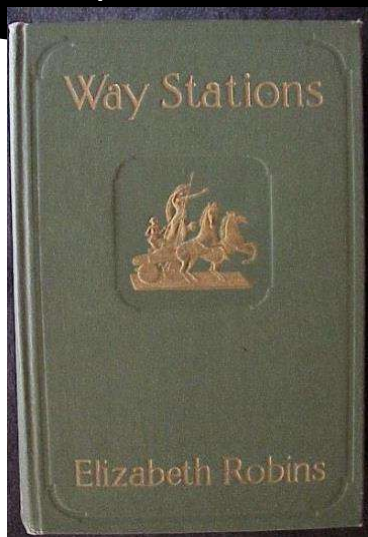
She delivered the JSU Faculty Scholar Lecture in 1995, "Elizabeth Robins: A Life in Letters."

She has edited Elizabeth Robins' play of 1907, "Votes for Women" published in the anthology, "Modern Drama by Women" (Routledge, 1996), and has co-edited (with Victoria Joan Moessner)

The Alaska Klondike Diary of Elizabeth Robins, 1900 (University of Alaska Press, 1999).

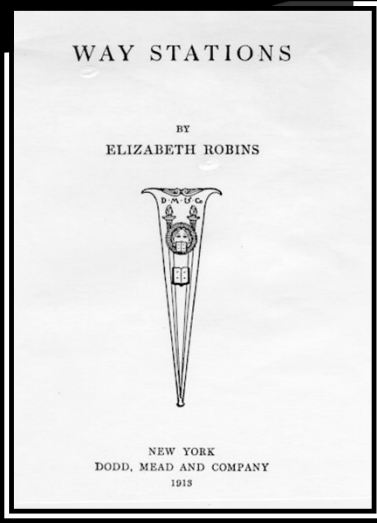
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Way Stations: Published 1913



Open Library has the pdf; which is link to the Google Books

My Robins web Transcribes a chapter by chapter copy



Amy Siskind's
The Weekly List
<https://theweeklylist.org/>

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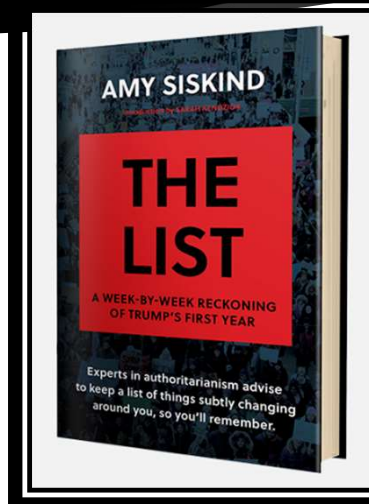
THIS IS HOW DEMOCRACY ENDS

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"Experts in authoritarianism advise to keep a list of things subtly changing around you, so you'll remember."

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- ▶ Book released March 27, 2018
- ▶ Covers first year or through
- ▶ November 2017
- ▶ Her web site is richer and features
One photo to highlight the week.
- ▶ "As featured in The Library of Congress."



Robins became a suffrage advocate

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- ▶ Ibsen actress in the 1890s
- ▶ Authored the play *Votes for Women*, produced 1907
- ▶ (began in 1906, published 1909)
- ▶ Before its stage production in April 1907, she began to turn the play into a novel where a long prequel culminated in the same action as the three-act play. (Act II recreates a Trafalgar Square Suffrage rally.)
- ▶ Title of the Novel: *The Convert* October 1907.
- ▶ First essay in *Way Stations*, *Woman's Secret*, has parallels to *Room of One's Own* and had been designed as preface to *The Convert*.
- ▶ Many essays and speeches followed. These are collected in *Way Stations* (1913). Subsequent essays such as "Christabel" are uncollected.

Especially with the addition of the Time Tables,

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- ▶ **We can witness the evolution of a movement and the escalation of political and police opposition, from:**
- ▶ **Open Air Speeches, to pageants, then to being jailed for protests;**
- ▶ **Followed by hunger strikes to oppose not being given political status, the forcible feeding, and more militant acts (Stone throwing, hammers used on storefront windows.)**

Some copies print this portrait.

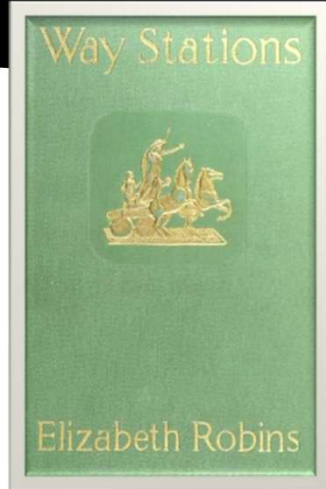
- ▶ Open Library / Google version
- ▶ Has this as front portrait to book version
- ▶ From Stanford Library
- ▶ publisher Hodder and Stoughton
- ▶ London, New York, Toronto



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Also, three copies at *Haithi Trust*

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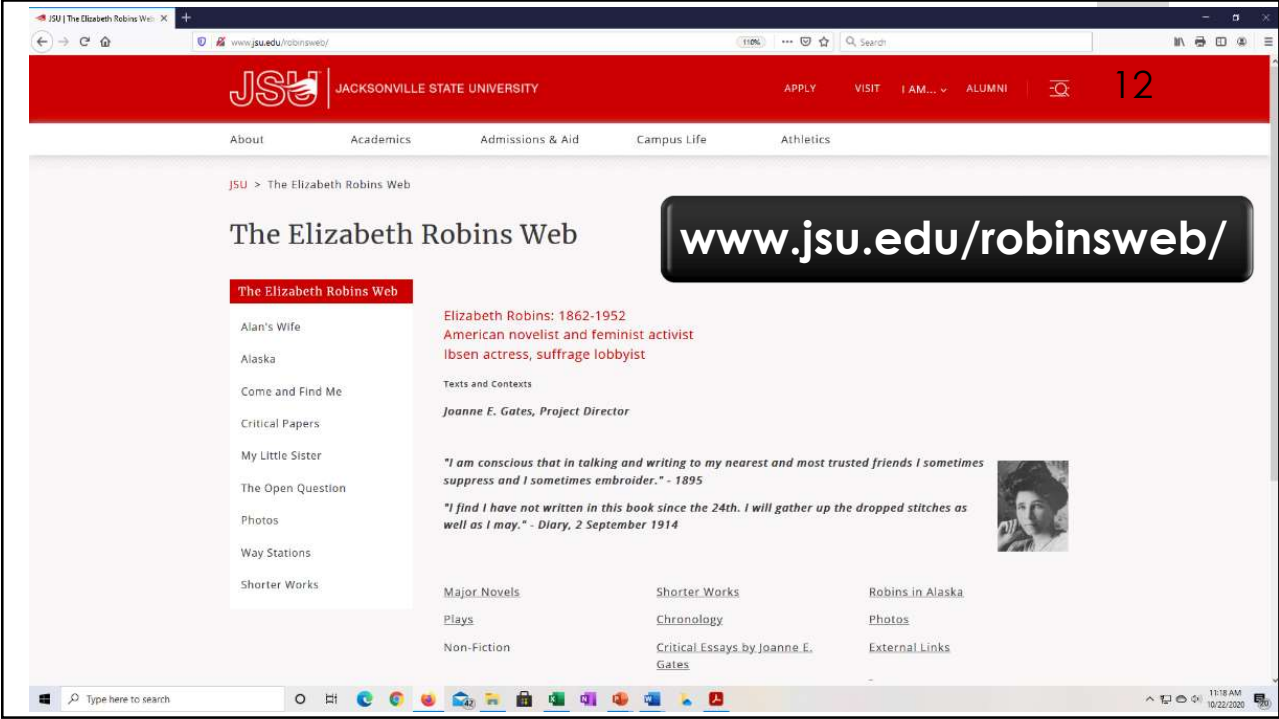
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JSU JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

APPLY VISIT I AM... ALUMNI

About Academics Admissions & Aid Campus Life Athletics


JSU > The Elizabeth Robins Web > Way Stations

Way Stations by Elizabeth Robins (1913)

The Elizabeth Robins Web

- Alan's Wife
- Alaska
- Come and Find Me
- Critical Papers
- My Little Sister
- The Open Question
- Photos
- Way Stations**
- Shorter Works

Way Stations by Elizabeth Robins (1913)

 Photo of Book Cover

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C O N T E N T S

BY THE SAME AUTHOR
 Image of list of other works, opposite title page

Image of **TITLE PAGE**

[AUTHOR'S NOTE](#)

I.

WOMAN'S SECRET page 1.

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My html Table of Contents at Robins Web

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Elizabeth Robins

Elizabeth Robins
fronticepiece
Woman's Secret, 1907



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**Slides that follow are from
Museum of London Collection**
Christina Broom, photographer

Women Writers,
13 June, 1908



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Women Writers



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- ▶ Members of the Women Writers' Suffrage League preparing to march in the NUWSS procession of 13 June 1908. The 'Writers' black and white velvet banner they carry was designed by Mary Lowndes and executed by Mrs Herringham, founding members of the Artists' Suffrage League. The WWSL had recently been formed in 1908 with the mission 'to obtain the vote for women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men. Its methods are those proper to writers - the use of the pen.' Founding members included Cicely Hamilton, Beatrice Harraden and Dorien Leigh. . . . Funding for the banner was donated by Cicely Hamilton and Evelyn Sharp and they carried it in the procession alongside Sarah Grand, Beatrice Harraden and **Elizabeth Robins**. Cicely Hamilton wrote of the banner that it was 'distinctive in black and white, impressive in velvet, and swelling, somewhat too proudly for comfort, in a gusty breeze'.
- ▶ Christina Broom, photographer, from Museum of London, <https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/object/436966.html>
- ▶ **Robins as President, addressed the Women Writers Suffrage League, at the Waldorf Hotel, London, May 4, 1909. Chapter VIII of Way Stations.**

Hyde Park



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Look alike to E Robins?
Second from left. She was
noted for her signature
feather boa,

Hyde Park



- ▶ Suffragettes in Hyde Park on Women's Sunday, 21st June 1908. The Suffragettes are gathered beside Platform 6, one of twenty platforms erected in the park for the rally from which leading Suffragettes delivered speeches. The chair of Platform 6 was Rosamund Massy. Other key speakers on this platform were Elsie Howey and Katherine Douglas Smith. In the image, wearing a mortarboard can be identified the Irish Suffragette Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington. Beside her is an 'officer' wearing a 'Banner Captain's' sash indicating the level of organisation that was key to the success of the procession and rally that involved 700 hundred banners.

Christina Broom, photographer, from Museum of London, <https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/object/436960.html>

- ▶ Robins does describe this in Chapter V, "The Meaning of It."

Royal Albert Hall

Christina Broom, photographer, from
Museum of London, object/297847.html

No specific date for this
photo. A suffrage gathering is
presumed.



- ▶ Robins includes two of her speeches delivered here:
- ▶ March 28, 1912
 - ▶ Chapter 18
- ▶ June 15, 1912
 - ▶ Chapter 20

Christabel in 1909

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Robins published a later essay

- ▶ "Christabel," in *Harper's Weekly*,
- ▶ December 27, 1913.
- ▶ Also is at the Robins Web, under Shorter Works.
- ▶ *Harper's* in the table of contents subtitles this: "How one prominent feminist looks to another."

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The Suffragette leader Christabel Pankhurst, 1909. The image was taken by Christina Broom during the two week Women's Exhibition held at the Princes' Skating Rink, Knightsbridge in May 1909.

The exhibition, organised by the Women's Social and Political Union to recruit new members and raise funds for the Votes for Women campaign, was regarded by the leadership as a triumphant success.

According to a report in *Votes for Women* on June 4th 1909 through the success of the exhibition 'We [the WSPU] have shown a new side to the public, with the result that our Movement has won a better understanding on the part of those who knew nothing about it except from hearsay'.


Christina Bloom, Museum of London

<https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/object/436953.html>

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Elizabeth Robins

Elizabeth Robins
frontispiece
Woman's Secret, 1907
Source from Hathi Trust
Archived edition



**All non Robins photos are from
Museum of London Collection**
Christina Broom, photographer

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University of Alabama Press,
1994, paper 2018.