



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Joan McCracken ephemera

ca. 1930-1958

*T-Mss 2001-010

Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan.

Summary

Creator: McCracken, Joan

Title: Joan McCracken ephemera

Date: ca. 1930-1958

Abstract: Joan McCracken was a dancer and a star of stage and screen. Her ephemera consists of scrapbooks, clippings, programs, sheet music and some personal items.

Access: Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult: <https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

Conditions Governing Access:

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Conditions Governing Use: For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Billy Rose Theatre Division.

Preferred citation: Joan McCracken Ephemera, *T-Mss 2001-010, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Processing note: Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan. The collection was reprocessed and cataloged according to new archival guidelines in 2001.

Creator History

Joan McCracken was a star of stage and screen, most notably a musical comedy star. She was born in Philadelphia on December 31, 1917 (most sources say 1922). A trained ballerina, she was the youngest soloist in the Philadelphia Ballet, starring Catherine Littlefield. Joan McCracken spent one year in the Radio City corps-de-ballet before moving to the Broadway stage. Her first role was in the

original production of *Oklahoma!* in 1943. Other roles were in *Bloomer Girl*, *Billion Dollar Baby*, *Me and Juliet* (1953), *Peter Pan* (1951), *Angel in the Pawnshop*, *The Sleeping Prince* (1957) and Clifford Odet's play *The Big Knife* (1949). Her films included *Good News* and *Hollywood Canteen*. She also starred in her own television show entitled *Claudia* (1952). She was married to the writer, Jack Dunphy and to the choreographer, Bob Fosse. She died November 1, 1961.

Custodial History

The Joan McCracken Ephemera was donated to the Theatre Collection sometime before 1990.

Scope and Content Note

The Joan McCracken Ephemera consists of scrapbooks, clippings, programs, sheet music and a few personal items such as school report cards and awards. The scrapbooks document her career as a dancer and musical comedy star. There are two scrapbooks documenting her early career in ballet during the 1930s. The other scrapbooks document her theatrical career. Productions included are *Angel in the Pawnshop*, *The Big Knife*, *Billion Dollar Baby*, *Bloomer Girl*, *Dance Me a Song*, *Galileo*, *Me and Juliet*, *Oklahoma!*, *Peter Pan*, *The Sleeping Prince*, motion pictures *Good News* and *Hollywood Canteen* and her television program *Claudia*.

Arrangement: Series I: Ephemera Series II: Scrapbooks

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings
Correspondence
Ephemera
Programs
Scrapbooks

Subjects

Dance -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia
Motion pictures -- California
Television
Theater -- New York (State) -- New York

Names

McCracken, Joan
Littlefield, Catherine
Philadelphia Ballet Company

Container List

Series I: Ephemera ca. 1930-1952 (1 box)

This series consists of an award, clippings, programs, photographs, school papers, sheet music and 2 pieces of correspondence. Of special note are the notes inserted into the sheet music for the motion picture *Good News*.

Alphabetical by form

- b. 1 f. 1 **State of Oklahoma award** November 12, 1943 (1 folder)
Award given to Joan McCracken making her an honorary citizen of the State of Oklahoma.
- b. 1 f. 2 **Clippings / Joan McCracken** (1 folder)
Miscellaneous clippings documenting the career of Joan McCracken.
- b. 1 f. 3 **Correspondence to Joan McCracken 1949-1957** (1 folder (2 items))
- b. 1 f. 4 **Miscellaneous sheet music** (1 folder)
Shiffirin, A. B. (Abraham B.), 1902-Rodgers, Richard, 1902-1979Arlen, Harold, 1905-1986
Sheet music for songs used by Joan McCracken. Includes music from *Good News*, *Angel in the Pawnshop*, *Bloomer Girl* and *Oklahoma!* *Good News* music has directions inserted.
- b. 1 f. 5 **Miscellaneous sheet music** (1 folder)
Sheet music for songs used by Joan McCracken.
- b. 1 f. 6 **Photograph of Joan McCracken with Al Capp** (1 folder)
Capp, Al, 1909-1979
- b. 1 f. 7 **Photographs / Joan McCracken** (1 folder)
Portraits of Joan McCracken.
- b. 1 f. 8 **Photograph of Joan McCracken practicing dance** (1 folder)
- b. 1 f. 9 ***The big knife / Clifford Odets*** (1 folder)
Photograph of the production *The Big Knife*.
- b. 1 f. 10 ***Billion dollar baby (Musical) / Morton Gould*** (1 folder)
Photographs of the production *Billion Dollar Baby*.
- b. 1 f. 11 ***Bloomer girl (Musical) / Harold Arlen*** (1 folder)
Photographs of the production *Bloomer Girl*.
- b. 1 f. 12 ***Dance me a song (Revue) / James Shelton*** (1 folder)
Photographs of the production *Dance Me a Song*.
- b. 1 f. 13 ***Galileo / Bertolt Brecht*** (1 folder)
Photographs of the production *Galileo*.
- b. 1 f. 14 ***Hollywood Canteen (Motion picture)*** (1 folder)
Photograph of the motion picture *Hollywood Canteen*.
- b. 1 f. 15 ***Me and Juliet (Musical) / Richard Rodgers*** (1 folder)
Photographs of the production *Me and Juliet*.
- b. 1 f. 16 ***Oklahoma! (Musical) / Richard Rodgers*** (1 folder)
Photograph of the production *Oklahoma!*
- b. 1 f. 17 ***Peter Pan (Musical) / Moose Charlap*** (1 folder)
Photographs of Joan McCracken as *Peter Pan*.
- b. 1 f. 18 ***Sleeping prince / Terence Rattigan*** (1 folder)
Photographs of the production *The Sleeping Prince*.
- b. 1 f. 19 **Programs / Joan McCracken** (1 folder)
Programs for productions which featured or starred Joan McCracken.
- b. 1 f. 20 **School papers / Joan McCracken** (1 folder)
A report card and a junior high school program belonging to Joan McCracken.

Series II: Scrapbooks ca, 1930-1958 (4 boxes (8 scrapbooks))

This series consists of 8 bound scrapbooks, primarily of clippings documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Early scrapbooks include clippings about the Philadelphia Ballet and Joan Littlefield. Later scrapbooks include productions such as *Angel in the Pawnshop*, *The Big Knife*, *Billion Dollar Baby*, *Bloomer Girl*, *Dance Me a Song*, *Galileo*, *Me and Juliet*, *Oklahoma!*, *Peter Pan*, *The Sleeping Prince*, motion pictures *Good News* and *Hollywood Canteen* and her television program *Claudia*.

Chronological

- b. 2 f. 1 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1935-1937 (1 folder)**
Littlefield, CatherinePhiladelphia Ballet Company
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Materials are primarily of the Philadelphia Ballet with Catherine Littlefield.
- b. 2 f. 2 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1936 (1 folder)**
Littlefield, CatherinePhiladelphia Ballet Company
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Materials are primarily of the Philadelphia Ballet with Catherine Littlefield.
- b. 3 f. 1 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1930-1943 (1 scrapbook)**
Littlefield, CatherinePhiladelphia Ballet Company
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Materials are primarily of the Philadelphia Ballet with Catherine Littlefield.
- b. 3 f. 2 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1949-1951 (1 scrapbook)**
Dance me a song (Revue)Shiffrin, A. B. (Abraham B.), 1902-Shelton, James, d. 1975
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Productions included are Dance Me a Song and Angel in the Pawnshop.
- b. 3 f. 3 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1950-1953 (1 scrapbook)**
Charlap, Moose, 1928-1974Rodgers, Richard, 1902-1979
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Productions included are Peter Pan, Oklahoma! and the television series Claudia.
- b. 3 f. 4 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1950-1958 (1 scrapbook)**
Rodgers, Richard, 1902-1979
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Productions included are Me and Juliet and the television series Claudia.
- b. 4 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1943-1948 (1 scrapbook)**
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken.
- b. 5 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1943-1950 (1 scrapbook)**
Brecht, Bertolt, 1898-1956Arlen, Harold, 1905-1986Gould, Morton, 1913-1996Odets, Clifford, 1906-1963
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Productions included are The Big Knife, Billion Dollar Baby, Bloomer Girl, Galileo and the motion pictures Good News and Hollywood Canteen.