



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Dorothy Kilgallen papers and scrapbooks**

1936-1965

\*T-Mss 1966-001

Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan.

## Summary

**Creator:** Kilgallen, Dorothy

**Title:** Dorothy Kilgallen papers and scrapbooks

**Date:** 1936-1965

**Size:** 8 linear feet (18 boxes)

**Source:** Gift, Kilgallen Family, 1966

**Abstract:** The Dorothy Kilgallen Papers and Scrapbooks consists of personal papers, photographs, and clippings documenting her versatile career as newswoman, actress, TV personality, radio hostess, wife and mother from 1930 to her death in 1965. The collection is a wealth of photographs and clippings, but has virtually no correspondence. Photographs include such notables as: Clark Gable, Joan Crawford, Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz, Joe DiMaggio and Rex Harrison, among others. The materials reveal Ms. Kilgallen as a celebrity; even personal family photographs have the flavor of posed publicity settings. The collection gives no glimpse of Dorothy Kilgallen's private life.

### Conditions Governing Access:

Photocopying prohibited.

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

**Preferred citation:** Dorothy Kilgallen Papers and Scrapbooks, \*T-Mss 1966-001, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan. Materials were primarily scrapbooks and included 43 volumes of Ms. Kilgallen's newspaper columns from The Journal-American. These were discarded in 1983 since The Journal-American is available on microfilm. The remaining portion of the collection was fully processed in 1992. One oversized photograph of Dorothy Kilgallen's graduation class from

Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn, New York was removed for conservation and separate oversized storage.

**Separated Materials:**

Oversized group photograph of Dorothy Kilgallen's graduation class. Back of photograph is signed by classmates.

## **Creator History**

Dorothy Kilgallen, newswoman, Broadway columnist and TV panelist was born in Chicago on July 3, 1913. Emulating her father, noted newsman James L. Kilgallen, she began her journalism career at the age of 17. In 1936 *The New York Evening Journal* sent her on an around-the-world trip in competition with reporters from two other daily newspapers. Romanticized as a modern Nellie Bly her fame was secured, receiving not only a role in the 1937 movie *Winner Take All*, but also a daily column entitled *The Voice of Broadway*. In 1945, Ms. Kilgallen and her husband, Richard Kollmar, became the stars of a morning radio program, *Breakfast With Dorothy and Dick*. It ran from 1945 until 1963. Her television career began when she appeared on the first panel of the quiz show *What's My Line?* in 1950. Dorothy Kilgallen was known for her tough reporting style, her stylish dress and her caustic commentary on notables of the day. She died on November 8, 1965.

## **Custodial History**

The Dorothy Kilgallen Papers and Scrapbooks were donated to the Billy Rose Theatre Division by the family of Ms. Kilgallen in 1966.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Dorothy Kilgallen Papers and Scrapbooks consist of personal papers, photographs and scrapbooks documenting her versatile career as newswoman, actress, TV personality, radio hostess, wife and mother from 1930 to her death in 1965. The collection is a wealth of photographs and clippings but has virtually no correspondence. It reveals Ms. Kilgallen as a celebrity, even personal family photographs have the flavor of posed publicity settings. The collection gives no glimpse of Dorothy Kilgallen's private life.

**Arrangement:** I. Papers II. Photographs III. Photograph Scrapbooks IV. Clippings Scrapbooks V. Richard Kollmar Scrapbook

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

Actors

Actresses

Celebrities

Gossip columnists -- United States

Women journalists -- United States

**Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Clippings

Photographic prints

Programs

Scrapbooks

**Names**

Kilgallen, Dorothy

Arnaz, Desi, 1917-1986

Ball, Lucille, 1911-1989

Crawford, Joan, 1908-1977

Di Maggio, Joe, 1914-

Gable, Clark, 1901-1960

Harrison, Rex

Kilgallen, James L.

Kollmar, Jill

Kollmar, Kerry, 1954-

Kollmar, Richard

Kollmar, Richard, Jr

## Container List

### Series I - Papers 1936-1945 (.1 lin.ft.)

This series includes some correspondence and personal mementos from the early years of Ms. Kilgallen's career. Included is a souvenir passenger list from the Hindenburg [1936], and an invitation to funeral services for Jean Harlow [1937].

#### By form

- b. 1 f. 1 Correspondence 1936-1938  
Includes invitation to funeral services of Jean Harlow.
- b. 1 f. 2 Telegrams 1938
- b. 1 f. 3 Certificate 1945
- b. 1 f. 4 Tickets, ephemera, etc.
- b. 1 f. 5 Miscellaneous papers

### Series II - Photographs 1936-1965 (.3 lin.ft.)

This series contains loose photographs of Ms. Kilgallen's family and celebrity acquaintances. Included in the celebrity photographs are politicians, movie stars, baseball players, singers and the evangelist, Billy Graham.

#### Alphabetical

- b. 1 f. 6 Dorothy Kilgallen with children & husband
- b. 1 f. 7 Dorothy Kilgallen at the circus
- b. 1 f. 8 Dorothy Kilgallen in Hawaii
- b. 1 f. 9 Dorothy Kilgallen with parents
- b. 1 f. 10 Dorothy Kilgallen on trip around the world 1936
- b. 1 f. 11 Dorothy Kilgallen with Don Ameche
- b. 1 f. 12 Dorothy Kilgallen with Lucille Ball Desi Arnaz
- b. 1 f. 13 Dorothy Kilgallen with Tony Bennett Richard Kollmar, her husband
- b. 1 f. 14 Dorothy Kilgallen with Joan Crawford
- b. 1 f. 15 Dorothy Kilgallen at the Columbia School of Journalism
- b. 1 f. 16 Dorothy Kilgallen with Joe DiMaggio
- b. 1 f. 17 Dorothy Kilgallen with Ella Fitzgerald
- b. 1 f. 18 Dorothy Kilgallen with Clark Gable
- b. 1 f. 19 Dorothy Kilgallen with Billy Graham
- b. 1 f. 20 Dorothy Kilgallen with Rex Harrison
- b. 1 f. 21 Dorothy Kilgallen with Andre Kostelanetz
- b. 1 f. 22 Dorothy Kilgallen with Fiorello LaGuardia
- b. 1 f. 23 Dorothy Kilgallen with Patti Page
- b. 1 f. 24 Dorothy Kilgallen with Johnny Ray
- b. 1 f. 25 Dorothy Kilgallen with John A. Roosevelt 1938
- b. 1 f. 26 Dorothy Kilgallen with Frank Sinatra
- b. 1 f. 27 *Dorothy Kilgallen in Winner Take All*
- b. 1 f. 28 Dorothy Kilgallen with Kate Smith

Series II - Photographs (cont.)

- b. 1 f. 29 Dorothy Kilgallen at the Stork Club
- b. 1 f. 30 Dorothy Kilgallen on the Universal Studio Tour
- b. 1 f. 31 Dorothy Kilgallen with Claire Trevor
- b. 1 f. 32 Dorothy Kilgallen on King Vidor's yacht 1956  
Letter included.
- b. 1 f. 33 *Dorothy Kilgallen in What's My Line*
- b. 1 f. 34 Dorothy Kilgallen 1957
- b. 1 f. 35 Dorothy Kilgallen 1960
- b. 1 f. 36 Dorothy Kilgallen (Miscellaneous)

Series III - Photograph Scrapbooks 1930-1965 (2.6 lin.ft.)

This series consists of photograph albums arranged by Dorothy Kilgallen. The albums are mostly thematic in content, with separate album for photographs of Dorothy and Dick, Jill, Dickie and Kerry Kollmar, her children and albums of publicity photographs of Ms. Kilgallen in all facets of her career.

NOTE: This series of photographs were originally in albums arranged by Dorothy Kilgallen. Due to the condition of the albums, the pages have been removed and they have been placed in acid free boxes. The original order of the photographs in each volume has been retained wherever possible. Because of this, the volumes may overlap in content.

Numerical

- b. 2 Scrapbook No. I - Dorothy and Dick

Folder 1 - Dorothy & Dick Wedding Photos  
Folder 2 - Dorothy & Dick - At Home Photos  
Folder 3 - Dorothy & Dick - 1  
Folder 4 - Dorothy & Dick - 2  
Folder 5 - Clippings

(items have been removed and placed in archival folders)

- b. 3 Scrapbook No. II - Dorothy Kilgallen

Folder 1 - Head shots  
Folder 2 - Fashion photographs  
Folder 3 - Publicity photographs - oversized  
Folder 4 - At home photographs  
Folder 5 - Miscellaneous  
Folder 6 - Balls and benefits  
Folder 7 - Publicity photographs (Washington Upholstery and Furniture Company)  
Folder 8 - Queen Elizabeth's visit (October 1957)  
Folder 9 - Graduation photographs from PS 119, June 1926  
Folder 10 - Baby shower  
Folder 11 - *What's My Line*  
Folder 12 - Dorothy Kilgallen and parents

(items have been removed and placed in archival folders)

Series III - Photograph Scrapbooks (cont.)

b. 4 Scrapbook No. III - Dorothy Kilgallen

Folder 1 - Dorothy Kilgallen with her father  
Folder 2 - Dorothy Kilgallen with Milton Berle  
Folder 3 - Dorothy Kilgallen at the circus, 1951  
Folder 4 - Dorothy Kilgallen with Billy Graham  
Folder 5 - Dorothy Kilgallen with Hedy Lamarr  
Folder 6 - Dorothy Kilgallen with Vincent Lopez  
Folder 7 - Dorothy Kilgallen with Sophia Loren  
Folder 8 - Dorothy Kilgallen with Jane Powell  
Folder 9 - Dorothy Kilgallen with Johnny Ray  
Folder 10 - Dorothy Kilgallen with Sugar Ray Robinson  
Folder 11 - Dorothy Kilgallen with Frank Sinatra  
Folder 12 - Dorothy Kilgallen at Steeplechase (Brooklyn, N.Y.)  
Folder 13 - Dorothy Kilgallen (Miscellaneous)

(items have been removed and placed in archival folders)

b. 5 Scrapbook No. IV - Dickie Kollmar, son of Dorothy Kilgallen

Folders 1-3 - Family photographs of son, Dickie  
Folder 4 - Clippings  
Folder 5 - Program - *Arsenic and Old Lace* with Jill Kollmar  
Folder 6 - Postcards from Bikini Island, 1946

(items have been removed and placed in archival folders)

b. 6 Scrapbook No. V - Dorothy Kilgallen 1936-1965

Folder 1 - Photographs, 1951  
Folder 2 - Photographs, 1960  
Folder 3 - Photographs, 1961  
Folder 4 - Publicity shots - Stephen Kennedy for Mayor  
Folder 5 - Program from Grauman's Chinese Theatre  
Folder 6 - Photographs, 1962  
Folder 7 - Souvenir passenger list from the Hindenburg, September 30, 1936  
Photograph from world trip, 1936  
Undated photographs

(items have been removed and placed in archival folders)

Series IV - Clippings Scrapbooks 1936-1965 (3 lin.ft.)

This series consists of bound volumes of clippings documenting the career of Dorothy Kilgallen. The clippings and articles are written not by Ms. Kilgallen, but about her; and range from short gossip column references to full-length articles.

Chronological

- b. 7 Scrapbook No. I October 1936-September 1948
- b. 8 Scrapbook No. II September 8, 1948-January 20, 1951
- b. 9 Scrapbook No. III January 20, 1951-May 30, 1952
- b. 10 Scrapbook No. IV June 1, 1952-May 23, 1953
- b. 11 Scrapbook No. V May 24, 1953-June 8, 1954
- b. 12 Scrapbook No. VI June 8, 1954-January 30, 1956
- b. 13 Scrapbook No. VII February 1, 1956-December 10, 1957
- b. 14 Scrapbook No. VIII January 9, 1957-June 10, 1960
- b. 15 Scrapbook No. IX April 1960-January 1961
- b. 16 Scrapbook No. X January 20, 1961-December 29, 1962
- b. 17 Scrapbook No. XI January 4, 1963-October 11, 1965

**Series V - Richard Kollmar Scrapbook 1940-1944 (2 lin.ft.)**

This series consists of one bound volume of clippings on the stage career of Richard Kollmar.

Chronological

- b. 18      **Richard Kollmar Scrapbook 1940-1944**