



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Joan Chandler papers

1923-1959

*T-Mss 2013-140

Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2014

Summary

Creator: Chandler, Joan, 1923-1979

Title: Joan Chandler papers

Date: 1923-1959

Size: 2.18 linear feet (6 boxes)

Source: Unknown.

Abstract: Joan Chandler (1923-1979, née Cheeseman) was a dancer and actor who appeared in theater, film, and television in the 1940s and 1950s. She studied dance at the Bennington School of the Arts, and was a member of the Martha Graham Dance Company in the early 1940s. She first appeared on Broadway in *The Late George Apley* (1944), and began acting in films in the mid-1940s. The Joan Chandler papers (1923-1959) consist of photographs, clippings, programs, scrapbooks, contracts, correspondence, and other papers documenting her career, her secondary and post-secondary schooling, and her family. Chandler's upbringing and schooling in Butler, Pennsylvania are represented by yearbooks, photographs, class notes, programs, sheet music, clippings, and memorabilia, mostly from the late 1930s and 1940. Materials from the Bennington School of the Arts date from 1939 to 1941 and include class notes on the Graham technique, orientation materials, performance programs, sheet music ("Modern Dance Technique Accompaniments" by Zoe Williams), and a script (*The King and the Duke* by Francis Fergusson). There are several programs from Chandler's performances with Graham and with the Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre, as well as two photographs of a Neighborhood Playhouse school production of *Heart of a City*. Photographs consist mostly of promotional images of Chandler, though there are also photographs of her as a child and photographs of her family members. Theater and film productions she appeared in are represented by clippings, production photographs, programs, contracts, and correspondence. There are photographs from the set of Alfred Hitchcock's film *Rope* (1948). The best-represented theater productions are *My Three Angels* (1953) and *The Late George Apley*. Materials concerning the latter production include a scrapbook. The collection contains a small number of letters and telegrams, most of which are congratulatory notes, but which also include a short 1953 letter from José Ferrer talking about his acting style and his sense of being out of place among young actors. There is a script for a 1959 Actors Studio production of *Herr Biedermann and the Arsonists*, a directed by Mordecai Gorelik, and a pamphlet about the Actors Studio. The collection includes an audio recording.

Conditions Governing Access:

Inquiries regarding audio recordings in the collection may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatre@nypl.org). Audio recordings will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

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Key Terms**Subjects**

Acting -- Study and teaching
Dance -- Study and teaching

Occupations

Actresses

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings (information artifacts)
Photographs
Programs (documents)

Titles

Rope (Motion picture)

Names

Bennington School of the Arts

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-6 Butler, Pennsylvania 1924-1941
- b. 6 f. 5-13 Butler, Pennsylvania Scrapbook 1931-1940
- b. 2 f. 1-5 Bennington School of the Arts 1939-1941
 - b. 2 f. 6 Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre circa 1943
- b. 2 f. 7-8 Martha Graham Dance Company 1937-1950s
 - Theater, Film, and Television
- b. 2 f. 9 Resumes 1950s
- b. 2 f. 10-16 Contracts, Correspondence, and Programs 1943-1959
 - Includes letter from José Ferrer.
- b. 3 f. 1-13 Photographs, Programs, and Clippings 1943-1955
 - Includes photographs for *Rope*.
- b. 1 f. 7-8 Actors' Studio 1955, 1959
- b. 6 f. 1-4 *The Late George Apley Scrapbook* 1944-1945
- b. 4 f. 1-8 Headshots and Personal Photographs 1923-1950s
- b. 5 f. 1-2 Headshots and Photographic Portraits 1940s-1950s
- b. 4 f. 9-12 Miscellaneous Clippings 1940-1957
- b. 5 f. 3-4 Miscellaneous Clippings 1945, 1947