



The New York Public Library  
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

**Walter Terry papers, Additions**

1909-1978 [bulk 1936-1978]

(S) \*MGZMD 380

Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2014

## Summary

**Creator:** Terry, Walter

**Title:** Walter Terry papers, Additions

**Date:** 1909-1978 [bulk 1936-1978]

**Size:** 2.94 linear feet (7 boxes)

**Source:** Donated by Walter Terry, 1979.

**Abstract:** Walter Terry was a dance critic and writer. He was dance editor for the New York Herald Tribune and published twenty-two books on dance. The Walter Terry papers, Additions (1909-1978, bulk 1936-1978) contain correspondence, research materials, promotional materials, and manuscripts of Terry's writings.

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**Processing note:** Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2014

**Related Materials:**

Walter Terry papers, (S) \*MGZMD 167. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

## Creator History

Walter Terry (1913-1982) was a dance critic and writer. He began his career as a dance critic at the Boston Herald in 1936, where he reported on the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. From 1939 to 1966, he worked for the New York Herald Tribune as a critic and dance editor. Terry published twenty-two books on dance, including *Invitation to Dance* (1942), *Star Performance: The Story of the World's Great Ballerinas* (1954), *Isadora Duncan: Her Life, Her Art, Her Legacy* (1964), *The Ballet Companion* (1968), and *Great Male Dancers of the Ballet* (1978).

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Walter Terry papers, Additions, date from 1909 to 1978 (bulk 1936-1978) and contain manuscripts, correspondence, ephemera, and research materials related to Terry's work as a dance writer and critic and to his activities with various dance organizations.

Correspondence consists mostly of letters to Terry, though some copies of outgoing letters are also present. Subjects of the correspondence include Terry's reviews and news about dancers and their work. Terry's correspondents are dancers, educators, and other colleagues, including Lincoln Kirstein, Doris Humphrey, Reginald and Gladys Laubin, and Miriam Winslow.

Ephemera and research materials include programs, promotional material, clippings, reports, and notes. Subjects of these materials include the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, New York City Ballet, Ballet Theatre, Isadora Duncan, and dance education. Promotional material for Terry's own work is also present. The earliest materials in the collection consist of a small amount of publicity material for Adeline Genée, dating from 1909 to the 1910s.

The collection contains responses to surveys that Terry conducted regarding dance education in American schools. Terry conducted surveys of colleges and universities in 1940 and 1947, and a survey of public elementary and secondary schools in 1951. The collection also includes some correspondence and other documents regarding Terry's work as dance editor for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

Manuscripts consist of typescripts of Terry's articles and books. Articles from the New York Herald Tribune, the Boston Herald, and other periodicals are present, as are some unpublished articles. Book manuscripts are *The Ballet Companion*; *Be Jubilant, My Feet!* (written in the 1940s); *Great Male Dancers of the Ballet*; *Invitation to Dance*; *Isadora Duncan: Her Life, Her Art, Her Legacy*; and *Star Performance: The Story of the World's Great Ballerinas*. Some of the manuscripts are incomplete. A partial manuscript of Kirsten Ralov's *The Bournonville School*, for which Terry did some editing and wrote an introduction, is also present.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

Dance -- Study and teaching -- United States

### **Occupations**

Dance critics

## Container List

### Correspondence, Ephemera, and Research Material

- b. 1 f. 1-12 1909-1961  
Includes Adeline Genée material.
- b. 2 f. 1-12 1930s-1959  
Includes Lincoln Kirstein, Doris Humphrey, and Miriam Winslow correspondence.
- b. 3 f. 1-8 1941-1978
- b. 4 f. 1-6 Dance Education Surveys 1940-1951
- b. 5 f. 1-2 Encyclopaedia Britannica 1955-1961

### Manuscripts

- b. 5 f. 3-9 **Articles** circa 1934-1950s  
Includes Boston Herald, New York Herald Tribune, and other articles.
- b. 4 f. 7 Interviews and Profiles 1932-1942

### Books

- b. 7 f. 1-3 The Ballet Companion 1960s
- b. 6 f. 1 Be Jubilant, My Feet! 1940s
- b. 7 f. 4-7 The Bournonville School 1977
- b. 6 f. 3-4 Great Male Dancers of the Ballet 1970s
- b. 6 f. 2 Invitation to Dance 1940s
- b. 6 f. 5 Isadora Duncan: Her Life, Her Art, Her Legacy 1960s
- b. 6 f. 6 Star Performances: The Story of the World's Great Ballerinas 1950s