



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Gertrude Lawrence collection**

1910-1952

\*T-Mss 1983-007

Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan.

## Summary

**Creator:** Lawrence, Gertrude

**Title:** Gertrude Lawrence collection

**Date:** 1910-1952

**Source:** Gertrude Lawrence Collection: Gift, Timothy Mogan-Owen, 1983

**Abstract:** The Gertrude Lawrence Papers contain photocopies of personal and business correspondence, as well as other material related to her career. Of note are diaries of her 1946 PYGMALION tour and her recollections of George Bernard Shaw.

**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:**

Photocopying prohibited.

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

**Location of Originals:** Location of originals: Timothy Morgan-Owen, Cheltenham, Gloucester, United Kingdom

**Preferred citation:** Gertrude Lawrence Collection, \*T-Mss 1983-007, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Processing note:** Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan.

## Creator History

Gertrude Lawrence, actress, was born Gertrud Alexandra Dagnar Lawrence Klasen in London,

England on July 4, 1898. She was a musical star of stage and screen. She worked frequently with producer John Golden, and with actor and writer Noel Coward. Miss Lawrence's last stage appearance was with Yul Brynner in the musical, *The King and I*, in 1951. Gertrude Lawrence died on September 6, 1952.

### **Custodial History**

The Gertrude Lawrence Collection was donated to the Billy Rose Theatre Division in 1983 by Timothy Morgan-Owen. The collection is entirely photocopies, the originals are held by Mr. Owen in England.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The Gertrude Lawrence Collection contains photocopies of personal and business correspondence, as well as other material related to her career. Of note is a diary of her 1946 *Pygmalion* tour and her recollections of George Bernard Shaw. The collection also contains copies of her birth certificate, divorce decree, eulogy and funeral program.

**Arrangement:** Series I: Personal Papers Series II: Correspondence

### **Key Terms**

#### **Occupations**

Actresses

#### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Correspondence

Diaries

#### **Titles**

Pygmalion

#### **Subjects**

Theater -- Great Britain

#### **Names**

Lawrence, Gertrude

Downes, Helen Converse

Shaw, Bernard, 1856-1950

## Container List

### Series I: Papers 1898-1952 (6 folders)

This series consists of photocopies of Gertrude Lawrence's birth certificate and divorce decree, her recollections of George Bernard Shaw, a copy of a diary she wrote on the tour of *Pygmalion*, and her funeral program and eulogy.

- b. 1 f. 1 **Vital records / Gertrude Lawrence 1898-1928 (1 folder)**  
Copies of Gertrude Lawrence's birth certificate [1898] and divorce decree [1928].
- b. 1 f. 2 **Diary / Gertrude Lawrence 1946 (1 folder)**  
Shaw, Bernard, 1856-1950  
Copy of a 1946 diary concerning the tour of *Pygmalion*.
- b. 1 f. 3 **Gertrude Lawrence's recollections of George Bernard Shaw February 13, 1949 (1 folder)**  
Shaw, Bernard, 1856-1950  
Recollections entitled Sunday Tea with George Bernard Shaw.
- b. 1 f. 4 **Eulogy / Gertrude Lawrence 1952 (1 folder)**
- b. 1 f. 5 **Funeral program / Gertrude Lawrence September 9, 1952 (1 folder)**
- b. 1 f. 6 **Photographs / Gertrude Lawrence (1 folder)**  
Photocopies of photographs of Gertrude Lawrence.

### Series II: Correspondence 1924-1941 (4 folders)

This series contains copies of letters Gertrude Lawrence wrote to Helen Converse Downes and to her daughter Pam. There is also some correspondence written to Gertrude Lawrence. Of special interest is a note written to her mother, after her mother's death signed "Gertie." Chronological

- b. 1 f. 7 **Correspondence / Gertrude Lawrence 1924-1925 (1 folder (4 letters))**  
Photocopies of correspondence from Gertrude Lawrence to Helen Converse Downes.
- b. 1 f. 8 **Correspondence / Gertrude Lawrence 1926 (1 folder)**  
Photocopies of correspondence from Gertrude Lawrence to Helen Converse Downes.
- b. 1 f. 9 **Correspondence / Gertrude Lawrence 1934-1939 (1 folder (5 letters))**  
Photocopies of correspondence from Gertrude Lawrence to Helen Converse Downes. Includes a introspective note written by Ms. Lawrence to her deceased mother and a letter to her daughter Pam.
- b. 1 f. 10 **Correspondence to Gertrude Lawrence ca. 1932-1941 (1 folder)**  
Photocopies of correspondence to Gertrude Lawrence. Includes a letter from her daughter Pam.