



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

John W. De Kay papers

1910?-1938

*T-Mss 1984-009

Summary

Creator: De Kay, John Wesley, 1874-1938

Title: John W. De Kay papers

Date: 1910?-1938

Size: 1 volume (153 leaves), 32 cm; 1 volume (153 leaves), 32 cm

Source: Papers: gift, Susan D. Smith, 08/30/84

Abstract: John Wesley De Kay, author and financier, wrote ca. twenty books and several plays, amassed and lost a number of fortunes, and pursued by charges of fraud for various financial deals, spent many years dodging extradition proceedings across Europe. Born in Iowa, he began his career in ranching and newspaper publishing in South Dakota, but by 1910 had achieved international business prominence as president of the Mexican National Packing Company which he had founded in 1902. In 1914 his play, *Judas*, starring Sarah Bernhardt, was produced at the London Coliseum. Collection consists of an unannotated typescript of De Kay's play, *Judas*, outlines and partial scripts with some handwritten changes for a few unproduced works, and an author's preface.

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>

Preferred citation: John W. De Kay papers, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library

Creator History

John Wesley De Kay, author and financier, wrote ca. twenty books and several plays, amassed and lost a number of fortunes, and pursued by charges of fraud for various financial deals, spent many years dodging extradition proceedings across Europe. Born in Iowa, he began his career in ranching and newspaper publishing in South Dakota, but by 1910 had achieved international business prominence as president of the Mexican National Packing Company which he had founded in 1902. In 1914 his play, *Judas*, starring Sarah Bernhardt, was produced at the London Coliseum.

Scope and Content Note

Collection consists of an unannotated typescript of De Kay's play, Judas, outlines and partial scripts with some handwritten changes for a few unproduced works, and an author's preface.

Key Terms**Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Scripts

Names

De Kay, John Wesley, 1874-1938

Bernhardt, Sarah, 1844-1923