



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

William Gaxton papers

circa 1937-1961

*T-Mss 2014-121

Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2015

Summary

Creator: Gaxton, William

Title: William Gaxton papers

Date: circa 1937-1961

Size: .84 linear feet (2 boxes)

Source: Unknown.

Abstract: William Gaxton (1893-1963) was a writer and performer in vaudeville and musical comedy. His papers date from about 1937 to 1961, and consist primarily of scripts that he wrote or performed, including scripts for stage comedies, musicals, and radio and television sketches. Many of the sketches are for Gaxton and his long-time comedy partner, Victor Moore. The collection contains multiple versions of *They Do or They Don't*, a musical comedy that Gaxton co-wrote with Wallace Sullivan; and a script, synopses, and a fundraising letter for *If I Were Queen*, a musical comedy with a book by Gaxton and Polan Banks and lyrics by Ogden Nash. There are scripts and other materials related to a proposed television program called *The Liars' Club*, an audience-participation show that Gaxton developed in the 1950s. Other scripts include *And No Birds Sing*, *Paradise Island*, and *The Big Shot*. The collection includes some lyrics, monologues, and a small number of letters to Gaxton about his performances and writings.

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 Use: The author/creator retains copyright of materials. For information on obtaining permission to publish, contact the Theatre Division at theatre@nypl.org.

Preferred citation: William Gaxton papers, *T-Mss 2014-121. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2015

Key Terms

Subjects

Comedy sketches

Musicals

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Scripts (documents)

Names

Moore, Victor, 1876-1962

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-12 circa 1937-1961
- b. 2 f. 1-7 1940s-1950s
Scripts for *If I Were Queen* and *They Do or They Don't*.