



## The New York Public Library Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

### **Anne Croswell papers**

1934-2004 [bulk 1951-2004]

\*T-Mss 2008-002

Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2014.

## Summary

**Creator:** Croswell, Anne

**Title:** Anne Croswell papers

**Date:** 1934-2004 [bulk 1951-2004]

**Size:** 5.71 linear feet (14 boxes)

**Source:** Donated by Bill Rich, 2008.

**Abstract:** Anne Croswell was a lyricist and playwright whose works included *Ernest in Love* and *Tovarich*. The Anne Croswell papers chiefly date from 1951 to 2004, and document Croswell's writing for the stage and television, as well as her books, poetry, and popular songs. The collection holds Croswell's notes and drafts of her work in various stages of revision and a small amount of other records related to the production and publication of her work, as well as drafts of her unpublished memoir, *Booze, Breakdowns, and Broadway*.

**Preferred citation:** Anne Croswell papers, \*T-Mss 2008-002. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

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

## Creator History

Anne Croswell (née Pearson, 1929-2011) was a lyricist and playwright. She wrote the lyrics for *Tovarich*, which was produced on Broadway in 1963 starring Vivien Leigh. In 1968, Croswell had another musical produced on Broadway, *I'm Solomon*, for which she wrote lyrics and co-wrote the book.

Croswell often worked on musical adaptations of books and plays. She wrote the lyrics and book for *Ernest in Love*, a well-received musical version of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, which premiered Off-Broadway in 1960. She also provided lyrics for *Conrack*, an adaptation of Pay Conroy's *The River is Wide* that was first performed in 1987. Croswell's other work with the theater includes lyrics for *Bodo*, produced at the Goodspeed Opera in 1982, and the libretto for *Sidekicks*, a satire on corporate America, published by Workman Publishing in 1983. Croswell collaborated frequently with composer Lee Pockriss.

In addition to her work for the theater, Croswell wrote for television and wrote lyrics for popular songs.

## Scope and Content Note

The Anne Croswell papers date from 1934 to 2004 (bulk 1951-2004) and document her work as a lyricist and playwright. Television scripts, book manuscripts, and poetry are also present. The collection holds Croswell's notes and drafts of her work in various stages of revision, along with a small amount of other records related to the production and publication of her work.

Biographical material consists of resumes and summaries of Croswell's career, and drafts of her memoir, *Booze, Breakdowns, and Broadway*, probably written in the late 1990s.

Croswell's book manuscripts and poetry include works intended for publication as well as poems written for friends and family. The collection holds two of Croswell's unpublished books of poetry: *Songs of Addiction: From Aspirin to Zabaglione*, and a photocopy of *Who Says I Have to Be A Couple?*, with illustrations by Bill Charmatz. A small amount of correspondence with agents and publishers is present.

Production files contain lyric drafts, script materials, and notes for plays and musicals that Croswell worked on. Files are present for *Chips 'n' Ale* (a musical adaptation of *She Stoops to Conquer*), *Conrack*, *Ernest in Love*, *I Have This Friend*, *Mother God Damn* (a musical adaptation of *The Shanghai Gesture*), *Sidekicks*, and *X-Rated Mother Nature* (featuring fact-based songs about animal mating habits). In addition to draft lyrics and script material, the *Conrack* files contain notes and suggested revisions from playwright Granville Burgess, and clippings of reviews. The *X-Rated Mother Nature* files include material related to a book of the same title that Croswell was writing with Priscilla Dunhill. The *Chips 'n' Ale* files consist entirely of photocopied scores with handwritten corrections. *Ernest in Love* material comprises a small number of clippings and royalty statements. The production files also hold unsorted script pages, lyrics, and notes, which include Croswell's notes on a potential musical adaptation of Edna Ferber's *Giant*.

Scripts in the collection are for plays, musicals, and television shows that Croswell wrote or co-wrote, or supplied lyrics for. There are multiple versions of some scripts, and some copies have annotations or corrections. A few scripts are accompanied by relevant notes and correspondence, though most such material can be found in the production files. Scripts are present for *Bodo*; *Chips 'n' Ale*; *Conrack*; *Ernest in Love*; *Good Bye, Ava* by Richard Bissell; *I Have This Friend*; *I'm Solomon*; *Mother God Damn*; and *The United States Steel Hour* episode "Huck Finn," among others. Scripts also contain the published score of *Ernest in Love*. The collection does not hold a complete script for *Tovarich*; only the first four scenes of Act I and some additional lyrics are present.

Printed matter comprises programs and published scores of individual songs. Many of the scores are for Croswell's collaborations with composer Gershon Kingsley. Programs mostly date between 1960 and 1992, but also include a 1934 program for the Théâtre de Paris production of *Tovaritch*, the French play that the musical *Tovarich* was based on.

The collection also holds a small number of handwritten scores of songs that Croswell wrote lyrics for, most of which do not pertain to musicals, along with correspondence regarding rights to some songs.

**Arrangement:** The collection is arranged in six categories: Biographical Material, Book Manuscripts and Poetry, Printed Matter, Production Files, Scripts, and Songs. Production Files and Scripts are

arranged alphabetically by production, with unsorted material arranged at the end.

## **Key Terms**

### **Occupations**

Dramatists

Lyricists

### **Subjects**

Musicals

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Scores

Scripts

### **Names**

Pockriss, Lee

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-5 Biographical Material 1990s
- b. 2 f. 1-4 Book Manuscripts and Poetry 1978-2004
- b. 1 f. 6-8 Book Manuscripts and Poetry 1990s
- b. 2 f. 5-7 Printed Matter 1934, 1960-1992
- Production Files
- b. 2 f. 8-9 *Bodo* 1970s
- b. 14 f. 2-3 *Chips 'n' Ale* 1974
- b. 3 f. 1-9 *Chips 'n' Ale - Conrack* 1974-2004
- b. 4 f. 1-12 *Conrack - Sidekicks* 1960-1992
- b. 14 f. 1 *Sidekicks* 1983
- b. 5 f. 1-9 *X-Rated Mother Nature* 1980s-1990
- b. 6 f. 1-8 *X-Rated Mother Nature, Unsorted Material* 1970s-1980s, 2000s
- Scripts
- b. 6 f. 9-12 The Amateurs - Bodo 1972, 1984, undated
- b. 7 f. 1-8 Bodo - Children of the Earth 1973-1984
- b. 8 f. 1-9 Chips 'n' Ale - Conrack 1974-1994, undated
- b. 9 f. 1-11 Conrack - Ernest in Love 1960, 1987, undated
- b. 10 f. 1-9 A Ferry Is a Boat - I Have This Friend 1957-1970s, undated
- b. 11 f. 1-8 I Have This Friend - I'm Solomon 1968-1989
- b. 12 f. 1-8 A Lov-e-ly Affair - Mother God Damn 1970s-1989
- b. 13 f. 1-6 Other Voices, Other Rooms - X-Rated Mother Nature 1963-1995
- b. 13 f. 7 Various Television Scripts 1951-1952
- b. 13 f. 9 Songs 1959-1972, undated