



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Ward Morehouse papers**

1877-1966 [bulk 1924-1966]

\*T-Mss 1971-001

Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan.

## Summary

**Creator:** Morehouse, Ward, 1898-1966

**Title:** Ward Morehouse papers

**Date:** 1877-1966 [bulk 1924-1966]

**Source:** Gift, Mrs. Ward Morehouse, 1971

**Abstract:** Ward Morehouse, journalist and playwright. The papers include correspondence, interviews, writings articles and ephemera documenting his career in the theater world.

### Conditions Governing Access:

Photocopying prohibited.

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

**Preferred citation:** Ward Morehouse Papers, \*T-Mss 1971-001, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Processing note:** Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan. The collection was reorganized and cataloged with a finding aid written in 2000.

## Creator History

Ward Morehouse was a journalist and playwright. He was born in Savannah, Georgia in 1898 to Augustus Ward Morehouse and Sallie McIntosh Morehouse. He began writing plays in high school and found he had a knack for the written word. Later he became a newspaper man, writing for such papers as *The Savannah Press*, *The Atlanta Journal*, *The New York Tribune* and *The Herald Tribune*. In 1926 he began writing for *The New York Sun* first as the writer for the column "Broadway After Dark" and later as the drama critic and roving correspondent. Some of his best writings were theatrical interviews of which he was called a master.

He also wrote articles for periodicals such as *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Theatre Arts*, *Pageant*, *Look*, *Pic*, *American Mercury*, *Playboy*, *The Reader's Digest* and *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*.

Ward Morehouse was a playwright as well. Among his works are *Gentlemen of the Press*, *U.S. 90*, *The Boss* and *Miss Quis*. Other writings include theater histories and biographies such as *American Reveille*, *George M. Cohan : Prince of the American Theatre*, *Matinee Tomorrow : 50 Years of our Theatre* and the autobiographical works *Just the Other Day* and *Forty-Five Minutes Past Eight*.

Ward Morehouse received the Silurian Award and the Literary Achievement Award from the Georgia Writers Association. He died in 1966.

## **Custodial History**

The collection was donated to the Billy Rose Theatre Division in 1971 by Mrs. Rebecca Morehouse.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Ward Morehouse papers contain correspondence, interviews, writings, articles and ephemera documenting his career as a journalist, drama critic and playwright. The materials are rich in information on the theater community in the mid part of the 20th century. Through the interviews one gains a sense of Morehouse's writing style which brings the personalities to life through his sharp and often witty characterizations. Personalities of note documented in the collection include Irving Berlin, William A. Brady, Billie Burke, William Gillette, Moss Hart, Helen Hayes, Katharine Hepburn, Elia Kazan, Lunt and Fontanne, Clifford Odets, Marjorie Rambeau, Richard Rodgers and Dwight Deere Wiman.

Other materials in the collection include research notes, correspondence and drafts for a proposed biography of Dwight Deere Wiman. Information included encompasses not only Wiman himself but his family including the Deere family.

**Arrangement:** Series I: Correspondence Series II: Writings Sub-series 1 - Interviews Sub-series 2 - Dwight Deere Wiman Biography Sub-series 3 - Other Writings Series III: Ephemera

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

Dramatic criticism

Dramatists

Theater -- United States

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Interviews

### **Occupations**

Theater critics

### **Names**

Morehouse, Ward, 1898-1966  
 Adams, Maude, 1872-1953  
 Atkinson, Brooks, 1894-1984  
 Bankhead, Tallulah, 1902-1968  
 Barrymore, Ethel, 1879-1959  
 Belasco, David, 1853-1931  
 Berlin, Irving, 1888-1989  
 Burke, Billie, 1885-1970  
 Claire, Ina, 1892-1985  
 Cohan, George M. (George Michael), 1878-1942  
 Collier, Constance, 1878-1955  
 Cornell, Katharine, 1893-1974  
 Coward, Noel, 1899-1973  
 Crawford, Joan, 1908-1977  
 Ferber, Edna, 1887-1968  
 Ferguson, Elsie  
 Fields, William, d1961  
 Fontanne, Lynn  
 Gillette, William, 1853-1937  
 Gish, Lillian, 1893-1993  
 Gordon, Ruth, 1896-1985  
 Hackett, Norman, 1874-  
 Hammerstein, Oscar, II, 1895-1960  
 Hardwicke, Cedric, 1893-1964  
 Harris, Jed  
 Hart, Moss, 1904-1961  
 Hayes, Helen, 1900-1993  
 Hepburn, Katharine, 1907-2003  
 Holbrook, Hal  
 Hull, Josephine, 1877-1957  
 Kazan, Elia  
 Lawrence, Gertrude  
 Lunt, Alfred.  
 Maugham, W. Somerset (William Somerset), 1874-1965  
 Mitchell, Grant, 1874-1957  
 Morgan, Frank, 1890-1949  
 Odets, Clifford, 1906-1963  
 Pinero, Arthur Wing, 1855-1934  
 Pollock, Channing, 1880-1946  
 Rambeau, Marjorie, 1889-1970  
 Raphaelson, Samson, 1896-1983  
 Rathbone, Basil, 1892-1967  
 Rodgers, Richard, 1902-1979  
 Swanson, Gloria, 1897-1983  
 Todd, Mike, 1909-1958  
 Van Druten, John, 1901-1957  
 Woods, A. H. (Albert Herman), 1870-1951  
 Lusitania (Steamship)

## Container List

### Series I: Correspondence 1924-1966 (1 box)

This series contains letters to Ward Morehouse from friends and professional contacts. Some of the correspondents are Brooks Atkinson, Maude Adams, Irving Berlin, Constance Collier, Joan Crawford, William Fields, Elsie Ferguson, William Gillette, Lillian Gish, Norman Hackett, Oscar Hammerstein, Moss Hart, Helen Hayes, Hal Holbrook, Elia Kazan, Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, Grant Mitchell, Frank Morgan, Channing Pollock, Marjorie Rambeau, Samson Raphaelson and Basil Rathbone. Of special note is a letter from M. Byer Allan (Rita Jolivet) describing her experience as a passenger during the sinking of the Lusitania.

#### Alphabetical

- b. 1 f. 1 Correspondence / M. Byer Allan 1963 (1 folder (2 pages))  
Lusitania (Steamship)  
Correspondence from M. Byer Allan (Rita Jolivet) to Ward Morehouse. Letter describes her experience as a passenger during the sinking of the Lusitania.
- b. 1 f. 2 Correspondence / Brooks Atkinson (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 3 Correspondence "A" ca. 1924-1944 (1 folder (5 pages))  
Adams, Maude, 1872-1953Anglin, Margaret, 1876-1958Alberghetti, Anna Maria  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes Maude Adams, Margaret Anglin and Anna Maria Alberghetti.
- b. 1 f. 4 Correspondence / Irving Berlin 1949-1958 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 5 Correspondence / William A. Brady 1943 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 6 Correspondence / Billie Burke (1 folder (1 letter))
- b. 1 f. 7 Correspondence "B" ca. 1942-1966 (1 folder (7 pages))
- b. 1 f. 8 Correspondence / Constance Collier (1 folder (4 pages))
- b. 1 f. 9 Correspondence / Joan Crawford 1960-1966 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 10 Correspondence / Anna Crouse 1966 (1 folder (2 letters))  
Cummings, Constance, 1910-2005  
Correspondence from Anna Crouse to Ward Morehouse, includes letter from Constance Cummings to Anna Crouse.
- b. 1 f. 11 Correspondence "C" ca. 1951-1963 (1 folder (7 pages))
- b. 1 f. 12 Correspondence "D" ca. 1950-1964 (1 folder (12 pages))  
Davis, Owen, 1874-1956Dawn, Hazel, 1894-Donehue, Vincent J., -1966Dowling, EddieDresser, Louise, 1878-1965Duke, Patty, 1946-2016  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes letters from Owen Davis, Hazel Dawn, Vincent Donehue, Eddie Dowling, Louise Dresser, Patty Duke.
- b. 1 f. 13 Correspondence / William Fields 1954 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 14 Correspondence / Elsie Ferguson April 24, 1947 (1 folder (2 pages))
- b. 1 f. 15 Correspondence "F" ca. 1948-1951 (1 folder (2 letters))  
Fry, ChristopherFontanne, Lynn  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes letters from Lynn Fontanne and Christopher Fry.
- b. 1 f. 16 Correspondence / Greer Garson 1963 (1 folder (1 letter))
- b. 1 f. 17 Correspondence / William Gillette 1935-1936 (1 folder (3 letters))
- b. 1 f. 18 Correspondence / Lillian Gish ca. 1961 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 19 Correspondence "G" 1943-1964 (1 folder (12 pages))  
Gilmore, Margalo, 1897-Geer, Will  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes letters from Margalo Gilmore and Will Geer.
- b. 1 f. 20 Correspondence / Norman Honore Hackett 1947-1950 (1 folder (3 letters))

Series I: Correspondence (cont.)

- b. 1 f. 21 Correspondence / Oscar Hammerstein 1952-1956 (1 folder (4 letters))
- b. 1 f. 22 Correspondence / Moss Hart ca. 1943-1959 (1 folder (3 letters, 1 telegram))
- b. 1 f. 23 Correspondence / Helen Hayes ca. 1947 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 24 Correspondence / Hal Holbrook 1961-1966 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 25 Correspondence / Charles Hopkins ca. 1946 (1 folder (3 pages))
- b. 1 f. 26 Correspondence "H" 1947-1966 (1 folder)  
Hellman, Lillian, 1906-Heckart, Eileen, 1919-2001Hildegard, 1906-2005Havoc, JuneHopkins, Arthur, 1879-1950  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes letters from Arthur Hopkins, Lillian Hellman, Eileen Heckart, Hildegard and June Havoc.
- b. 1 f. 27 Correspondence / Elia Kazan 1956-1960 (1 folder (3 letters))
- b. 1 f. 28 Correspondence / Walter Kerr (1 folder (1 letter))
- b. 1 f. 29 Correspondence / Alfred Lunt 1954-1966 (1 folder (4 letters))
- b. 1 f. 30 Correspondence "L" 1936-1947 (1 folder)  
Le Gallienne, Eva, 1899-1991Larrimore, Francine, 1898-1975  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes Eva Le Gallienne and Frances Larrimore.
- b. 1 f. 31 Correspondence / Mary Martin (1 folder (1 letter, 1 telegram))
- b. 1 f. 32 Correspondence / Grant Mitchell (1 folder (5 pages))
- b. 1 f. 33 Correspondence / Frank Morgan 1947 (1 folder (2 pages))
- b. 1 f. 34 Correspondence "M" ca. 1950-1957 (1 folder (6 pages))
- b. 1 f. 35 Correspondence / Clifford Odets 1950 (1 folder (1 letter))
- b. 1 f. 36 Correspondence / Nance O'Neil (1 folder (1 letter))
- b. 1 f. 37 Correspondence "N-O" ca. 1955-1966 (1 folder (3 letters))  
Nathan, George Jean, 1882-1958Nettleton, Lois, 1930-O'Shea, Tessie  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes letters from George Jean Nathan, Lois Nettleton and Tessie O'Shea.
- b. 1 f. 38 Correspondence / Channing Pollock 1937-1944 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 39 Correspondence "P" 1949-1964 (1 folder (2 letters))  
Porter, Cole, 1891-1964Paige, Janis  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes letters from Cole Porter and Janis Paige.
- b. 1 f. 40 Correspondence / Marjorie Rambeau 1963 (1 folder (4 pages))
- b. 1 f. 41 Correspondence / Samson Raphaelson (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 42 Correspondence / Basil Rathbone ca. 1950 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 43 Correspondence / Richard Rodgers 1957-1966 (1 folder (2 letters))
- b. 1 f. 44 Correspondence "R" 1954-1960 (1 folder (2 letters))  
Rose, Billy, 1899-1966  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes a letter from Billy Rose.
- b. 1 f. 45 Correspondence / James Stewart 1965 (1 folder (1 letter))
- b. 1 f. 46 Correspondence / Gloria Swanson June 18, 1951 (1 folder (1 letter))
- b. 1 f. 47 Correspondence "S" 1944-1959 (1 folder (11 pages))  
Stickney, DorothySkinner, Cornelia Otis, 1901-1979Sanderson, JuliaStarr, Frances  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes letters from Dorothy Stickney, Cornelia Otis Skinner, Julia Sanderson and Frances Starr.
- b. 1 f. 48 Correspondence / Booth Tarkington April 2, 1944 (1 folder)

Series I: Correspondence (cont.)

- b. 1 f. 49     **Correspondence "T" 1949-1966** (1 folder (4 pages))  
Tucker, Sophie, 1884-1966  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes a letter from Sophie Tucker.
- b. 1 f. 50     **Correspondence / Joyce Van Patten** (1 folder (1 letter))
- b. 1 f. 51     **Correspondence "W" ca. 1948-1962** (1 folder (10 pages))  
Wong, Anna May, 1905-1961Widmark, RichardWood, Peggy, 1892-1978  
Correspondence to Ward Morehouse, includes letters from Anna May Wong, Richard Widmark and Peggy Wood.
- b. 1 f. 52     **Memos from Ward Morehouse ca. 1956** (1 folder)  
Shumlin, Herman, 1898-1979  
Memos [1956 and undated] sent by Ward Morehouse.

Series II: Writings

This series contains transcripts of interviews by Ward Morehouse, articles written by him and papers regarding a proposed biography of Dwight Deere Wiman which was never completed.

Sub-series 1 - Interviews (1 box)

This sub-series consists of transcripts of 50 interviews done by Ward Morehouse with notables of the theatrical community. Included are Maude Adams, Tallulah Bankhead, Ethel Barrymore, David Belasco, Irving Berlin, Billie Burke, Ina Claire, George M. Cohan, Katharine Cornell, Noel Coward, Edna Ferber, William Gillette, Ruth Gordon, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Jed Harris, Moss Hart, Helen Hayes, Katharine Hepburn, Josephine Hull, Elia Kazan, Gertrude Lawrence, Lunt and Fontanne, W. Somerset Maugham, Clifford Odets, Sir Arthur Wing Pinero, Marjorie Rambeau, Richard Rodgers, Gloria Swanson, Michael Todd, John Van Druten and A. H. Woods.

Alphabetical

- b. 2 f. 1     **Interview / Maude Adams** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 2     **Interview / Michael Arlen** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 3     **Interview / Tallulah Bankhead** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 4     **Interview / Ethel Barrymore** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 5     **Interview / David Belasco** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 6     **Interview / Irving Berlin** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 7     **Interview / William A. Brady** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 8     **Interview / Billie Burke** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 9     **Interview / Mary Chase** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 10    **Interview / Dave Chasen** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 11    **Interview / Ina Claire** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 12    **Interview / George M. (George Michael) Cohan** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 13    **Interview / Katharine Cornell** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 14    **Interview / Noel Coward** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 15    **Interview / Owen Davis** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 16    **Interview / Edna Ferber** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 17    **Interview / Christopher Fry** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 18    **Interview / William Gillette** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 19    **Interview / Ruth Gordon** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 20    **Interview / Sir Cedric Hardwicke** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 21    **Interview / Jed Harris** (1 folder)

Series II: Writings (cont.)

Sub-series 1 - Interviews (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 22 Interview / Julie Harris (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 23 Interview / Moss Hart (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 24 Interview / Helen Hayes (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 25 Interview / Katharine Hepburn (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 26 Interview / Arthur Hopkins (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 27 Interview / Josephine Hull (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 28 Interview / Elia Kazan (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 29 Interview / Gertrude Lawrence (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 30 Interview / Pauline Lord (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 31 Interview / Lunt and Fontanne (1 folder)  
Lunt, Alfred. Fontanne, Lynn
- b. 2 f. 32 Interview / W. Somerset (William Somerset) Maugham (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 33 Interview / Elliott Nugent (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 34 Interview / Clifford Odets (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 35 Interview / Sir Arthur Wing Pinero (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 36 Interview / Marjorie Rambeau (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 37 Interview / Florence Reed (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 38 Interview / Elmer Rice (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 39 Interview / Richard Rodgers (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 40 Interview / Edward Sheldon (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 41 Interview / Robert E. (Robert Emmett) Sherwood (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 42 Interview / Hassard Short (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 43 Interview / Gloria Swanson (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 44 Interview / Laurette Taylor (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 45 Interview / Michael Todd (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 46 Interview / Lee Tracy (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 47 Interview / Ernest Truex (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 48 Interview / John Van Druten (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 49 Interview / Dwight Deere Wiman (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 50 Interview / A. H. (Albert Herman) Woods (1 folder)

Sub-series 2 - Dwight Deere Wiman Biography ca. 1940-1960 (3 folders)

This sub-series consists of correspondence, drafts, notes and research materials for a proposed biography of Dwight Deere Wiman.

- b. 3 f. 1 Correspondence regarding Dwight Deere Wiman biography 1948-1961 (1 folder)  
O'Casey, Sean, 1880-1964 Wiman, Dwight Deere, 1895-1951  
Correspondence regarding a biography of Dwight Deere Wiman to be written by Ward Morehouse. Includes letters from Sean O'Casey.
- b. 3 f. 2 Biography of Dwight Deere Wiman (1 folder)  
Wiman, Dwight Deere, 1895-1951--Biography  
Chapter drafts and notes for a biography of Dwight Deere Wiman by Ward Morehouse.
- b. 3 f. 3 Research materials / Dwight Deere Wiman (1 folder)  
Research materials for the Dwight Deere Wiman biography.

Series II: Writings (cont.)

Sub-series 3 - Other Writings (5 folders)

This sub-series contains typescripts of miscellaneous articles by Ward Morehouse. Included are articles on Violet Dale, Katharine Hepburn and Gertrude Lawrence.

Alphabetical by subject

- b. 3 f. 4 ***Broadway after dark typescripts*** (1 folder)  
Typescripts for various *Broadway After Dark* articles by Ward Morehouse.
- b. 3 f. 5 **Violet Dale article** (1 folder)  
Dale, Violet
- b. 3 f. 6 **Katharine Hepburn article** (1 folder)  
Hepburn, Katharine, 1909-
- b. 3 f. 7 **Gertrude Lawrence article** (1 folder)  
Lawrence, Gertrude
- b. 3 f. 8 **Mr. Richmond article** (1 folder)

Series III: Ephemera ca. 1877-1966 (5 folders)

This series contains clippings and reviews documenting the life and career of Ward Morehouse, as well as other ephemeral items. Of special note is a report on the theater knowledge of Harry Truman and two letters written by Josephine Baker and Benjamin Farjeon collected by Ward Morehouse.

- b. 3 f. 9 **Clippings / Ward Morehouse** (1 folder)
- b. 3 f. 10 **Reviews of Ward Morehouse writings** (1 folder)
- b. 3 f. 11 **Report of President Truman's theater knowledge 1949** (1 folder)  
Truman, Harry S., 1884-1972
- b. 3 f. 12 **Letters collected by Ward Morehouse 1877** (1 folder (2 letters))  
Baker, Josephine, 1906-1975Farjeon, B. L. (Benjamin Leopold), 1833-1903  
Letters written by Josephine Baker and Benjamin Farjeon collected by Ward Morehouse.
- b. 3 f. 13 **Book jacket for George M. Cohan** (1 folder)  
George M. Cohan, prince of the American theaterMorehouse, Ward, 1898-1966  
Book jacket for the biography George M. Cohan written by Ward Morehouse.