



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Joan McCracken ephemera**

ca. 1930-1958

\*T-Mss 2001-010

Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan.

## Summary

**Creator:** McCracken, Joan

**Title:** Joan McCracken ephemera

**Date:** ca. 1930-1958

**Abstract:** Joan McCracken was a dancer and a star of stage and screen. Her ephemera consists of scrapbooks, clippings, programs, sheet music and some personal items.

**Conditions Governing Access:**

Photocopying prohibited.

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

**Preferred citation:** Joan McCracken Ephemera, \*T-Mss 2001-010, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

**Processing note:** Processed by Mary Ellen Rogan. The collection was reprocessed and cataloged according to new archival guidelines in 2001.

## Creator History

Joan McCracken was a star of stage and screen, most notably a musical comedy star. She was born in Philadelphia on December 31, 1917 (most sources say 1922). A trained ballerina, she was the youngest soloist in the Philadelphia Ballet, starring Catherine Littlefield. Joan McCracken spent one year in the Radio City corps-de-ballet before moving to the Broadway stage. Her first role was in the original production of *Oklahoma!* in 1943. Other roles were in *Bloomer Girl*, *Billion Dollar Baby*, *Me and Juliet* (1953), *Peter Pan* (1951), *Angel in the Pawnshop*, *The Sleeping Prince* (1957) and Clifford Odet's play *The Big Knife* (1949). Her films included *Good News* and *Hollywood Canteen*. She also starred in her own television show entitled *Claudia* (1952). She was married to the writer, Jack Dunphy and to the choreographer, Bob Fosse. She died November 1, 1961.

## **Custodial History**

The Joan McCracken Ephemera was donated to the Theatre Collection sometime before 1990.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Joan McCracken Ephemera consists of scrapbooks, clippings, programs, sheet music and a few personal items such as school report cards and awards. The scrapbooks document her career as a dancer and musical comedy star. There are two scrapbooks documenting her early career in ballet during the 1930s. The other scrapbooks document her theatrical career. Productions included are *Angel in the Pawnshop*, *The Big Knife*, *Billion Dollar Baby*, *Bloomer Girl*, *Dance Me a Song*, *Galileo*, *Me and Juliet*, *Oklahoma!*, *Peter Pan*, *The Sleeping Prince*, motion pictures *Good News* and *Hollywood Canteen* and her television program *Claudia*.

**Arrangement:** Series I: Ephemera Series II: Scrapbooks

## **Key Terms**

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Clippings  
Correspondence  
Ephemera  
Programs  
Scrapbooks

### **Subjects**

Dance -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia  
Motion pictures -- California  
Television  
Theater -- New York (State) -- New York

### **Names**

McCracken, Joan  
Littlefield, Catherine  
Philadelphia Ballet Company

## Container List

### Series I: Ephemera ca. 1930-1952 (1 box)

This series consists of an award, clippings, programs, photographs, school papers, sheet music and 2 pieces of correspondence. Of special note are the notes inserted into the sheet music for the motion picture *Good News*.

Alphabetical by form

- b. 1 f. 1 **State of Oklahoma award** November 12, 1943 (1 folder)  
Award given to Joan McCracken making her an honorary citizen of the State of Oklahoma.
- b. 1 f. 2 **Clippings / Joan McCracken** (1 folder)  
Miscellaneous clippings documenting the career of Joan McCracken.
- b. 1 f. 3 **Correspondence to Joan McCracken 1949-1957** (1 folder (2 items))
- b. 1 f. 4 **Miscellaneous sheet music** (1 folder)  
Shiffrin, A. B. (Abraham B.), 1902-Rodgers, Richard, 1902-1979Arlen, Harold, 1905-1986  
Sheet music for songs used by Joan McCracken. Includes music from *Good News*, *Angel in the Pawnshop*, *Bloomer Girl* and *Oklahoma!* *Good News* music has directions inserted.
- b. 1 f. 5 **Miscellaneous sheet music** (1 folder)  
Sheet music for songs used by Joan McCracken.
- b. 1 f. 6 **Photograph of Joan McCracken with Al Capp** (1 folder)  
Capp, Al, 1909-1979
- b. 1 f. 7 **Photographs / Joan McCracken** (1 folder)  
Portraits of Joan McCracken.
- b. 1 f. 8 **Photograph of Joan McCracken practicing dance** (1 folder)
- b. 1 f. 9 ***The big knife / Clifford Odets*** (1 folder)  
Photograph of the production *The Big Knife*.
- b. 1 f. 10 ***Billion dollar baby (Musical) / Morton Gould*** (1 folder)  
Photographs of the production *Billion Dollar Baby*.
- b. 1 f. 11 ***Bloomer girl (Musical) / Harold Arlen*** (1 folder)  
Photographs of the production *Bloomer Girl*.
- b. 1 f. 12 ***Dance me a song (Revue) / James Shelton*** (1 folder)  
Photographs of the production *Dance Me a Song*.
- b. 1 f. 13 ***Galileo / Bertolt Brecht*** (1 folder)  
Photographs of the production *Galileo*.
- b. 1 f. 14 ***Hollywood Canteen (Motion picture)*** (1 folder)  
Photograph of the motion picture *Hollywood Canteen*.
- b. 1 f. 15 ***Me and Juliet (Musical) / Richard Rodgers*** (1 folder)  
Photographs of the production *Me and Juliet*.
- b. 1 f. 16 ***Oklahoma! (Musical) / Richard Rodgers*** (1 folder)  
Photograph of the production *Oklahoma!*
- b. 1 f. 17 ***Peter Pan (Musical) / Moose Charlap*** (1 folder)  
Photographs of Joan McCracken as *Peter Pan*.
- b. 1 f. 18 ***Sleeping prince / Terence Rattigan*** (1 folder)  
Photographs of the production *The Sleeping Prince*.
- b. 1 f. 19 **Programs / Joan McCracken** (1 folder)  
Programs for productions which featured or starred Joan McCracken.
- b. 1 f. 20 **School papers / Joan McCracken** (1 folder)  
A report card and a junior high school program belonging to Joan McCracken.

**Series II: Scrapbooks ca, 1930-1958 (4 boxes (8 scrapbooks))**

This series consists of 8 bound scrapbooks, primarily of clippings documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Early scrapbooks include clippings about the Philadelphia Ballet and Joan Littlefield. Later scrapbooks include productions such as *Angel in the Pawnshop*, *The Big Knife*, *Billion Dollar Baby*, *Bloomer Girl*, *Dance Me a Song*, *Galileo*, *Me and Juliet*, *Oklahoma!*, *Peter Pan*, *The Sleeping Prince*, motion pictures *Good News* and *Hollywood Canteen* and her television program *Claudia*.

Chronological

- b. 2 f. 1 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1935-1937 (1 folder)**  
Littlefield, CatherinePhiladelphia Ballet Company  
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Materials are primarily of the Philadelphia Ballet with Catherine Littlefield.
- b. 2 f. 2 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1936 (1 folder)**  
Littlefield, CatherinePhiladelphia Ballet Company  
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Materials are primarily of the Philadelphia Ballet with Catherine Littlefield.
- b. 3 f. 1 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1930-1943 (1 scrapbook)**  
Littlefield, CatherinePhiladelphia Ballet Company  
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Materials are primarily of the Philadelphia Ballet with Catherine Littlefield.
- b. 3 f. 2 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1949-1951 (1 scrapbook)**  
Dance me a song (Revue)Shiffrin, A. B. (Abraham B.), 1902-Shelton, James, d. 1975  
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Productions included are Dance Me a Song and Angel in the Pawnshop.
- b. 3 f. 3 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1950-1953 (1 scrapbook)**  
Charlap, Moose, 1928-1974Rodgers, Richard, 1902-1979  
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Productions included are Peter Pan, Oklahoma! and the television series Claudia.
- b. 3 f. 4 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1950-1958 (1 scrapbook)**  
Rodgers, Richard, 1902-1979  
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Productions included are Me and Juliet and the television series Claudia.
- b. 4 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1943-1948 (1 scrapbook)**  
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken.
- b. 5 **Scrapbook / Joan McCracken 1943-1950 (1 scrapbook)**  
Brecht, Bertolt, 1898-1956Arlen, Harold, 1905-1986Gould, Morton, 1913-1996Odets, Clifford, 1906-1963  
Scrapbook documenting the career of Joan McCracken. Productions included are The Big Knife, Billion Dollar Baby, Bloomer Girl, Galileo and the motion pictures Good News and Hollywood Canteen.