The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

# Joan McCracken ephemera

ca. 1930-1958
*T-Mss 2001-010

## 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.

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**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.

Series I: Ephemera (cont.)

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.