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Guide to the Fred W. Atkinson Drama Collection 1880-1925



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.ATKINSONF
Title	Atkinson, Fred W. Drama Collection
Date	1880-1925
Size	5.25 linear feet (5 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Fred W. Atkinson (1865-1941) was an educator and administrator best known for his tenure as the general superintendent of education in the Philippines (1900-1903) and president of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn (1904-1925). This collection contains his materials related to the history and practice of American drama. It includes a significant number of theatrical programs from the early-twentieth century (largely based in New York City), as well as articles and essays he compiled concerning the American dramatic tradition. It also contains correspondence related to his collection of American plays, as well as scrapbooks and photo albums of famous actors and actresses from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Information on Use

Access

This collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Atkinson, Fred W. Drama Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Biographical Note

Fred Washington Atkinson was born in 1865 in Reading, MA. He was the son of George W. and Eliza Atkinson. He received his B.A. at Harvard College in 1890, and was married the same year to Winnifred G. Whitford in Waltham, MA. Atkinson then studied at Berlin, Halle, Leipzig, and Jena Universities, as well as the Sorbonne in Paris. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Leipzig in 1893.

Atkinson then worked as a teacher and principal in the Springfield, MA school system from 1894-1900. In 1900 he was selected to assume the post of general superintendent of education in the Philippines. When he returned to the United States, he served briefly as the superintendent of schools in Newton, MA in 1904 before he was selected to assume the presidency of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, a position he held until 1925. From 1916-1918 he served as a member of the New York City Board of Education. A frequent contributor to magazines and educational journals, Atkinson also published *The Philippine Islands* (1905), an account of the political and social conditions he encountered while serving in the Philippines' colonial government.

Scope Note

This collection is divided into three series: Series I: Correspondence; Series II: Theatrical Ephemera; and Series III: Oversize.

Series I includes Atkinson's correspondence regarding his collection of American plays, including his efforts to collect plays performed by members of the military from the War Department in the years following World War I.

Series II is divided into four subseries: Theater Programs and Playbills; Press Clippings and Notes; Writings Concerning American Drama; and Scrapbooks and Photographs. These subseries contain numerous theatrical programs from the early-twentieth century; newspaper and magazine clippings regarding the state of American drama; articles and essays concerning the history and character of American drama; and photographs and magazine prints of prominent actors and actresses from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Series III contains oversized newspaper articles and clippings related to the history of American drama as well as contemporary theatrical performances. It also includes four photo albums with pictures of famous actors and actresses from the late-nineteenth century such as Lillian Russell, Sarah Bernhardt, Edwin Booth, Maurice Barrymore, Julia Marlowe, and Lillie Langtry.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Barron, Elwyn A. Papers

Campbell, Mrs. Patrick. Letters

Chicago Drama Performances. Index

Goldman, Samuel. Papers

Goodrich, Adelaide Eunice. Collection

Moody, William Vaughn. Papers

Morton, Charles, Agency. Collection of American Popular Drama

Playbill and Program. Collection

Theatrical Portraits and Illustrations. Collection

Wilt, Napier. Papers

Please see also the Fred W. Atkinson Collection of American Drama. The University of Chicago acquired this substantial collection of American plays from Fred W. Atkinson in 1925. Six years later, the University of Chicago acquired Atkinson's collection of 72 early American novels and works of fiction. The collection is notable both for the breadth of its early American holdings and its Ethiopian Drama section, which consists of nineteenth-century minstrel plays and joke books.

Subject Headings

- Atkinson, Fred W. (Fred Washington), 1865-1941
- American drama
- Theater--United States
- Celebrity Pictures
- Actors
- Actresses

INVENTORY

Series I: Correspondence

Box 1

Folder 1

Helen Tyler Brown, 1918-1920

Box 1

Folder 2

Gladys Cisney, 1924

Box 1

Folder 3

Jane Dransfield, 1923

Box 1

Folder 4

Julia M. Johnson, 1921

Box 1

Folder 5

Frederick H. Koch, 1921-1923

Box 1

Folder 6

G. Tyler Mairs, 1916

Box 1

Folder 7

Frederick J. Shepard, 1915

Box 1

Folder 8

War Department, 1923-1924

Series II: Theatrical Ephemera

Subseries 1: Theater Programs and Playbills

Box 1

Folder 9

American Drama Matinees broadside, 1917

Box 1

Folder 10

Theater program booklets, 1909-1921

Box 1

Folder 11

Theater programs, 1914-1924

Subseries 2: Press Clippings and Notes

Box 1

Folder 12

The Carolina Dramatic Association – Regulations for the play contests, 1924

Box 1

Folder 13

The Dial clippings, 1915-1917

Box 1

Folder 14

The Drama clippings, 1919-1922

Box 1

Folder 15

The Literary Digest clippings, 1923

Box 1

Folder 16

The Nation – "The First American Play," fragment, 1918

Box 1

Folder 17

Newspaper clippings, circa 1915-1924

Box 1

Folder 18

Eugene O'Neill clippings, circa 1921-1922

Box 1

Folder 19

The Theatre clippings, circa 1915-1922

Box 1

Folder 20

Notes regarding various plays, circa 1915-1925

Subseries 3: Writings concerning American Drama

Box 1

Folder 21

"America's First Dramatic Satire," and "A Review of Early American Plays," typescript, undated

Box 1

Folder 22

American Drama Year – "Revival of America's First Comedy," 1917

Box 1

Folder 23

William Archer, "The Development of American Drama," Harper's Magazine, 1920

Box 1

Folder 24

The Bookman's Literary Club Service – "Contemporary American Drama," undated

Box 1

Folder 25

The Bulletin of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences," 1916

Box 1

Folder 26

Oral Sumner Coad, "The American Theatre in the Eighteenth Century," The South Atlantic Quarterly, 1918

Box 1

Folder 27

The Drama League of America – Monthly Bulletin and Study Course on American Drama, 1916

Box 1

Folder 28

Joseph Wood Krutch, "George Henry Boker," Sewanee Review, 1917

Box 1

Folder 29

Clara Morris, "A Memory of Dion Boucicault," The Cosmopolitan, 1905

Box 1

Folder 30

New York Drama League – "Drama Calendar," 1919

Box 1

Folder 31

The New York Public Library – Branch Library News, 1916

Box 1

Folder 32

Old Penn: Weekly Review of the University of Pennsylvania, 1916

Box 1

Folder 33

Arthur Hobson Quinn, "The Significance of Recent American Drama," Scribner's Magazine, 1922

Box 1

Folder 34

Arthur Hobson Quinn, "The Value of American Plays," reprint from The New York Evening Post, 1921

Box 1

Folder 35

E.J. Streubel, "The American Drama," Branch Library News, 1916

Box 1

Folder 36

Theodore S. Woolsey, "The American Vasari," The Yale Review, 1914

Box 1

Folder 37

T. R. Ybarra, "New York's Don Juan of A Century Ago," The Literary Digest International Book Review, 1923

Subseries 4: Scrapbook and Photographs

Box 2

Folder 1

Magazine photographs, circa 1922

Box 2

Folder 2

Scrapbook containing mounted clippings of actors and actresses, 1880-1911

- Unmounted portraits of actors and actresses, 1888-1893
- 12 photographs of cast of the one hundredth performance of The Two Orphans, Union Square Theatre, New York, 1875

Series III: Oversize

Box 3

Folder 1

Newspaper Clippings, circa 1916-1924

Box 3

Folder 2

Newspaper Clippings, circa 1916, 1922

Box 3

Folder 3

William Lyon Phelps, "The Clyde Fitch I Knew," The Evening Post, The Literary Review, newsprint, 1920

Box 4

Two albums containing photographs of actors and actresses, circa 1890s

Box 5

Two albums containing photographs of actors and actresses, circa 1890s