Guide to the University of Chicago Blackfriars Records 1904-1983

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Descriptive Summary

Identifier
ICU.SPCL.BLACKFRIARS

Title
University of Chicago. Blackfriars. Records

Date
1904-1983

Size
16.5 linear feet (19 boxes)

Repository
Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract
The records of the University of Chicago Blackfriars, a student dramatic organization, include by-laws, correspondence, contracts, lists of members, productions and officers, printed and manuscript scores of productions, posters, photographs, and recordings.

Information on Use

Access
Due to the lack of listening/access copies for recordings, researchers will need to consult with staff before using audio material. The remainder of the collection is open for research.

Citation
When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: University of Chicago. Blackfriars. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Historical Note
The Blackfriars was formed in late 1903 by Frank R. Adams, the first Abbot of the order. Named after the notable theater of Elizabethan London, the Blackfriars was inspired by Harvard’s Hasty Pudding, Princeton’s Triangle, and other early collegiate musical comedy groups. Membership was restricted to male students, and included one man from each University fraternity as well as any campus actors "fitted for amusing themselves and others". The first production, a satire of the Department of Political Economy titled "The Passing of Pahli Kahn," was presented in the spring of 1904. The new organization proved to be so popular that original Blackfriars musical comedies became an eagerly awaited feature of every spring season.
While the early shows sometimes suffered from awkward staging, the Blackfriars satires of the
1920's and 1930's benefited from shrewd publicity and the aid of professional designers and
directors. In the wake of the Depression and World War II, however, lavish extravaganzas were
abandoned for productions of a more modest scale. In the 1950s the Blackfriars began admitting
women. The group remained an active group on the University campus, finally merging with the
University Theater in 1986.

Scope Note
The collection has been divided into four series.

Series I contains administrative material related to the history operations of the group, including
by-laws and contracts and notes of board meetings.

Series II contains chronologically organized files which contain printed and manuscript scores,
programs, clippings, and other materials documenting individual productions. These materials
are supplemented and sometimes duplicated by the songbooks in Series IV.

Series III includes audio recordings of productions and slides documenting a limited number of
shows.

Series IV contains bound songbooks for productions dating from 1908 to 1940.

Subject Headings
• University of Chicago. Blackfriars
• College operas, revues, etc. -- University of Chicago
• Musicals -- Vocal scores with piano
• Sound recordings

INVENTORY
Series I: Administrative Records
  Box 1
  Folder 1
    By-laws and contracts, 1914, 1925-1941
  Box 1
Folder 2
"Blackfriars, University of Chicago," ritual of the Blackfriars, member signatures up to the
"243 seven," leather bound volume, 1904-circa 1940

Box 1
Folder 3
Historical accounts, lists of productions, 1904-1942; list of officers, 1904-1963,
1976-1983

Box 1
Folder 4
Correspondence, 1912-1941

Box 1
Folder 5
Board meeting agendas and notes, 1982-1983

Series II: Productions

Box 2
Folder 1
"The Passing of Pahli Kahn," 1904

Box 2
Folder 2
"The King’s Kalendar Keeper," 1905

Box 2
Folder 3
"The Rushing of Raxes," 1906

Box 2
Folder 4
"Sure Enough Segregation," 1907

Box 2
Folder 5
"The Sign of the Double Eagle," 1908

Box 2
Folder 6
“The Sign of the Double Eagle,” Musical Score 1908

Box 2
Folder 7
"The Pseudo-Suffragettes," 1910

Box 2
Folder 8
Initiation banquet program, 1911

Box 2
Folder 9
"Capturing Calypso," 1911

Box 2
Folder 10
"The Pursuit of Portia," 1912
Folder 11  
"Pranks of Paprika," 1913  

Box 2  
Folder 12  
"The Student Superior," 1914  

Box 2  
Folder 13  
"A Night of Knights," 1915  

Box 3  
Folder 1  
"A Rhenish Romance," 1916  

Box 3  
Folder 2  
"Myth in Mandel," 1917  

Box 3  
Folder 3  
"Naughty Nineties," 1919  

Box 3  
Folder 4  
"Barbara Behave," 1920  

Box 3  
Folder 5  
"The Machination of Max," 1921  

Box 4  
Folder 1-3  
"Anybody's Girl," 1922  

Box 5  
Folder 1-2  
"The Filming of Friars," 1923  

Box 5  
Folder 3  
"So Long Susan," 1924  

Box 5  
Folder 4-5  
"Kaiti from Haiti," 1925  

Box 5  
Folder 6-7  
"Wallie Watch-Out," 1926  

Box 5  
Folder 8  
"Wallie Watchout," Playbill, 1926  

Box 6  
Folder 1  
"Plastered in Paris," 1927  

Box 6  
Folder 2-3
"The House that Jack Built," 1928
Box 6
Folder 4
"Mr. Cinderella," 1929
Box 6
Folder 5
"Mr. Cinderella," 1929
Box 6
Folder 6
"Smart Alec," 1930
Box 6
Folder 7
"Captain Kidd Junior," 1931
Box 7
Folder 1
"Whoa Henry!" 1932
Box 7
Folder 2
“The Mirror,” 1932
Box 7
Folder 3
“One Foot in the Aisle,” 1932
Box 7
Folder 4
"Gypped in Egypt," 1933
Box 7
Folder 5
“Gypped in Egypt,” production notes 1933
Box 7
Folder 6
"Merger for Millions," 1934
Box 7
Folder 7
“Merger for Millions,” production notes, 1934
Box 8
Folder 1
"In Brains We Trust," playbill, 1935
Box 8
Folder 2
“In Brains We Trust,” songbooks, 1935
Box 8
Folder 3
"Fascist and Furious," 1936
Box 8
Folder 4
“Fascist and Furious,” songbook, playbill and clippings, 1936
Box 8
Folder 5
"One Foot in the Aisle," 1937
Box 8
Folder 6
"Where in the World," 1938
Box 8
Folder 7
"Love over the Line," 1939
Box 8
Folder 8
"Patients, Please," 1940
Box 8
Folder 9
"Dust It Off," 1941
Box 8
Folder 10
Clipping, 1956
Box 8
Folder 11
"Gamma Delta Iota," 1957
Box 8
Folder 12
"Sour Mash," 1959
Box 8
Folder 13
"Silver Bells and Cockle Shells," 1960
Box 8
Folder 14
"Mad Money," 1961
Box 9
Folder 1
"Sing Out Sweet Rock," 1962
Box 9
Folder 2
"Aside From All That," 1963
Box 9
Folder 3
"Casino in the Sky," 1965
Box 9
Folder 4
"Hey, Manny," 1966
Box 9
Folder 5
"The Boys from Syracuse," 1967
Box 9
Folder 6
"Amerika," 1968

Box 9

Folder 7
"The Fantastiks," 1969

Box 9

Folder 8
"The Charge of the Nubian Cavalry," 1969

Box 9

Folder 9
"Sweetlife," 1970

Box 9

Folder 10
"The Democratic Way," 1971

Box 9

Folder 11
"You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown," 1972

Box 9

Folder 12
"The Scholar’s Progress," 1972

Box 9

Folder 13
"The Deceitful Dean," 1972

Box 10

Folder 1
"Harper's Folly," 1973

Box 10

Folder 2
"The History of Musical Comedy; From Herbert to Hair," 1973

Box 10

Folder 3-4
"Struggling Upward," 1973

Box 10

Folder 5

Box 10

Folder 6
"The Apple Tree," 1974

Box 11

Folder 1-2
"Arthur," 1974

Box 11

Folder 3
Orientation Show, 1974

Box 11

Folder 4
Production Notes, 1974-1975
Box 11
Folder 5
"South Side Story," 1975
Box 11
Folder 6
"Anything Goes," 1975
Box 11
Folder 7
Orientation Show, 1975
Box 11
Folder 8
"The Beggar's Opera," 1976
Box 12
Folder 1-2
"Publish or Perish," 1976
Box 12
Folder 3
Orientation Show, 1976
Box 12
Folder 4
"Merlin," 1976
Box 12
Folder 5
"The Castle," 1977
Box 12
Folder 6
Orientation Show, 1977
Box 12
Folder 7
"A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," 1977
Box 12
Folder 8
"The Wind in the Willows," 1977
Box 12
Folder 9
"Me & Juliet," 1978
Box 12
Folder 10
"Once Upon a Mattress," 1978
Box 12
Folder 11
"Sweet Charity," 1979
Box 12
Folder 12
"You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," 1979
Box 12
Folder 13
"Godspell," 1980
Box 12
Folder 14
"Man of La Mancha," 1980
Box 12
Folder 15
"Pippin," 1981
Box 12
Folder 16
"Publish or Perish," 1981
Box 12
Folder 17
"All's Fair," 1982
Box 12
Folder 18
"Guys & Dolls," 1982
Box 12
Folder 19
"Bye Bye Birdie," 1983
Box 12
Folder 20
"Roommates," undated
Box 12
Folder 21
Miscellaneous undated programs and drawings

Series III: Audio-Visual Materials

Box 13
"Sour Mash," 78 rpm record (14 copies), 1959
Box 13
"Alpha Centauri," 78 rpm record (7 copies), 1958
Box 13
"Gamma Delta Iota," LP, 1957
Box 13
Sing Out Sweet Rock," LP, 1962
Box 13
"Struggling Upward," 2 reels, 1973
Box 13
"Merlin," 2 reels, 1976
Box 14
Guys & Dolls," audio cassette, 1982
Box 14
"Merlin," two audio cassettes, 1976
Box 14
"Publish or Perish," slides, 1975

**Box 14**
Unidentified slides, undated

**Box 14**
Printing block, undated

Series IV: **Songbooks**

**Box 15**
**Folder 1**
Songbooks, 1908-1912

**Box 15**
**Folder 2**
Songbooks, 1908-1912

**Box 15**
**Folder 3**
Songbooks, 1908-1912

**Box 16**
**Folder 1**
Songbooks, 1908-1912

**Box 16**
**Folder 2**
Songbooks, 1913-1917

**Box 16**
**Folder 3**
Songbooks, 1913-1917

**Box 17**
**Folder 1**
Songbooks, 1913-1917

**Box 17**
**Folder 2**
Songbooks, 1913-1917

**Box 17**
**Folder 3**
Songbooks, 1913-1917

**Box 18**
**Folder 1**
Songbooks, 1918-1922

**Box 18**
**Folder 2**
Songbooks, 1919-1922

**Box 18**
**Folder 3**
Songbooks, 1923-1927

**Box 19**
**Folder 1**
Songbooks, 1928-1930 & 1933-1940