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Guide to the Mrs. Patrick Campbell Letters 1905-1938



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier ICU.SPCL.CAMPBELLMRS

Title Campbell, Mrs. Patrick. Letters

Date 1905-1938

Size 0.5 linear feet (1 box)

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

Abstract Mrs. Campbell was an actress and her collection contains primarily correspondence but also includes photographs, newspaper clippings, playbills, and broadsides. Most of the letters are addressed to Mrs. Frank (Harriett) Carolan, later Mrs. Arthur Schermerhorn.

Information on Use

Access

No restrictions.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Campbell, Mrs. Patrick. Letters,

Biographical Note

Beatrice Stella Campbell (1865-1940), known professionally as Mrs. Patrick Campbell, was a renowned English actress, famous for her portrayal of characters at once passionate and intelligent. The daughter of Jon Tanner, an English businessman in India, and Maria Romanini, an Italian countess, she began her professional stage career in 1888. Her first great success was as Paula in "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" by Arthur Pinero. Among her famous Shakespearian roles were Juliet, Lady Macbeth, and Ophelia. She also starred as Mélisande in Maeterlinck's "Pélleas and Mélisande," and in the title roles in Ibsen's *dedda Gabler*, Hofmannsthal's "Elektra," and Yeats' "Deirdre." In 1914 she created the role of Eliza Doolittle in Shaw's "Pygmalion," and she maintained a warm friendship with the playwright. After World War I, she played few new roles, mainly recreating her former starring parts on tour in the United States and England. During the 1930's she also played minor roles in several American films. She died in 1940 in Pau, France.

Scope Note

The overwhelming majority of the letters of Mrs. Campbell in this collection are addressed to Mrs. Frank (Harriett) Carolan, later Mrs. Arthur Schermerhorn. In her autobiography, *My Life and Some Letters* (1922), Mrs. Campbell writes of Mrs. Carolan as "one of my dearest friends." Their friendship was long-standing and Mrs. Campbell often called on Mrs. Carolan for financial aid.

The letters fall mainly into two groups, one series between 1905 and 1918, and a second between 1927 and 1938. All of the letters are chatty and informal. The first series, however, deals mainly with her theatrical career. Of some interest are Mrs. Campbell's frequent pungent remarks about American audiences during her tours. Many famous people are briefly mentioned, such as George Bernard Shaw, Charles Laughton, and Katherine Cornell. Mrs. Campbell writes of the opening nights of many of her plays, of accidents, which befell her, such as when she broke her knee-cap in Philadelphia in 1905, and when her hair caught on fire during a performance. A carbon copy of a letter from her son is included in the papers. He was a British officer in World War I and fought at Gallipoli. His long letter movingly recreates the battle conditions existing on that front. He was later killed in France.

The second series, material after 1927, reveals clearly the decline in Mrs. Campbell's fortunes, her inability to find work, and her constant money difficulties. The collection includes several letters from Hollywood, where she had gone to find work, but had little success.

The collection also includes correspondence of Mrs. Campbell with others. There are also several letters to Mrs. Carolan from her daughter Stella, her son Alan ("Beo"), and her second husband, George Cornwallis-West. The collection also includes 14 photographs, 8 of Mrs. Campbell, and some playbills, broadsides, and clippings.

Related Resources

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

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

Subject Headings

- Campbell, Patrick, Mrs., 1865-1940
- Carolan, Harriet Pullman, 1869-1956
- Actresses
- Letters (correspondence)
- Photographs

INVENTORY

Series I: Correspondence

Box 1

Folder 1

1904

- BSC to Mrs. Cowles
- Stella Campbell to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 2

1905

- BSC to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 3

1908

- BSC to Harriett Carolan
- BSC to Frank Carolan
- Alan (Beo) Campbell to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 4

1909

- BSC to Harriett Carolan
- Alan (Beo) Campbell to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 5

1910

- BSC to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 6

1911

- BSC to Harriett Cardan
- BSC to Frank Carolan
- Stella Campbell to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 7

1912

- BSC to Harriett Carolan
- Alan (Beo) Campbell to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 8

1914

- BSC to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 9

1915

- BSC to Harriett Carolan
- George Cornwallis-West to Harriett Carolan
- T.W.W. Forest to BSC (Mrs. G. Cornwallis-West)

Box 1

Folder 10

1916

- BSC to Harriett Carolan
- Enclosure: Alan (Beo) Campbell to BSC (carbon)
- Harriett Carolan to BSC (copy night letter)
- G. Cornwallis-West to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 11

1918

- BSC to Harriett Carolan
- G Cornwallis-West to Harriett Carolan

Box 1

Folder 12

1927

- BSC to Harriett Schermerhorn
- (plus 2 clippings, 2 advertisements)

Box 1

Folder 13

1930

- Helen Arthur to Harriett Schermerhorn

Box 1

Folder 14

1931

- BSC to Harriett Schermerhorn
- Enclosures: Cornelia Lunt to BSC (carbon)
- Nina Englehart to BSC "
- Photo of golden eagle feeding its young
- BSC to Mrs. Tower
- Itinerary of tour

Box 1

Folder 15

1932

- BSC to Harriett Schermerhorn
- Stella Campbell to Harriett Schermerhorn
- Elizabeth Carmichael to H. Schermerhorn
- Kendall Mussey to BSC
- Enclosures: Draft of speech for BSC
- Statement to press of Mussey
- Katharine Cornell to BSC (telegram)

Box 1

Folder 16

1933

- BSC to Harriett Schermerhorn
- Stella Campbell to H. Schermerhorn
- Enclosures: clipping of review of play
- I. Van Meter to BSC
- Bills for dresses

Box 1

Folder 17

1934

- BSC to Harriett Schermerhorn

Box 1

Folder 18

1935

- BSC to Harriett Schermerhorn

Box 1

Folder 19

1937

- BSC to Harriett Schermerhorn

Box 1

Folder 20

1938

- BSC to Harriett Schermerhorn

Box 1

Folder 21

Undated

- BSC to Harriett Schermerhorn
- BSC to an unknown person
- Notation on envelope of seats for play

Series II: Photographs

Box 1

Folder 22

- Beatrice Stella Campbell in costume
- Snapshots of BSC

Box 1

Folder 23

- Stella Campbell in presentation gown, 1906
- Stella Campbell in snapshot
- Stella Campbell in costume

Box 1

Folder 24

George Cornwallis-West in portrait, 1915

Box 1

Folder 25

Moonbeam, BSC's dog, in 1930's

Series III: Miscellaneous Material

Box 1

Folder 26

Playbills and broadsides

Box 1

Folder 27

Newspaper clippings (reviews of plays and recitals; articles on her life and activities; obituary).