

Sandy Wilson:

A Preliminary Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator	Wilson, Sandy, 1924-2014
Title:	Sandy Wilson Papers
Dates:	1936-1996
Extent:	17 boxes, 1 oversize box (8.48 linear feet)
Abstract:	The papers include produced and unproduced plays, mostly musicals but also plays for stage and TV, as well as drafts of Wilson's published and unpublished works including an autobiography, illustrated book, novels, articles, and short stories, along with correspondence.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-04835
Language:	English
Access	Open for research. Researchers must create an online Research Account and agree to the Materials Use Policy before using archival materials. Part or all of this collection is housed off-site and may require up to three business days' notice for access in the Ransom Center's Reading and Viewing Room. Please contact the Center before requesting this material: reference@hrc.utexas.edu

Administrative Information

Acquisition	Gift, 1999 (G11358)
Processed by	Liz Murray, 1999
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Scope and Contents

"The creation of a musical is the most satisfying thing in the world..." Sandy Wilson, talk given at Oxford, May 5, 1955

The papers of British author, composer, and lyricist Sandy Wilson include his produced and unproduced plays, mostly musicals but also plays for stage and television, as well as drafts of his published and unpublished works including an autobiography, illustrated book, novels, articles, and short stories, along with correspondence spanning a 60 year period from the 1930s to 1990s. His musicals, produced worldwide, especially his long-running play *The Boy Friend* (1952-1994), are well-represented. Material related to productions of his plays includes scripts, scores, lyrics, programs, reviews, production photographs, correspondence, and scrapbooks. Wilson organized his papers prior to donating the collection to the Ransom Center. His descriptions are used throughout the following inventory. Wilson wrote drafts of his works in lined notebooks, often followed later by typescripts. To avoid repetition of the entry "holograph notebook" in the folder list, assume that his writings appear in these notebooks, unless otherwise noted.

The collection is arranged in three Series: Series I. Works, 1936-1994, Series II. Career-Related Material, and Series III. Correspondence, 1953-1996.

Series I is subdivided into Subseries A. Major Works, 1943-1994 and Subseries B. Notebooks and Drafts, 1936-1981. The produced and unproduced, published and unpublished works in Subseries A are arranged alphabetically by title, regardless of literary form. Within titles, the order follows the creative process from notes and drafts to the completed work. For example, for the musical *Clapham Wonder*, the script sequence begins with a holograph manuscript, proceeds through two typescript versions, and ends with the rehearsal script. If production materials are present, the sequence may include lyrics, scripts, correspondence, photographs, programs, and reviews. Some of Wilson's plays are based on the works of other writers such as Cecil Beaton (*My Royal Past*), Barbara Comyns (*Clapham Wonder*), Ronald Firbank (*Caprice*), Christopher Isherwood (*Goodbye to Berlin*), John Collier (*His Monkey Wife*), Compton Mackenzie (*Siren Song*), and R. B. Sheridan (*The Rivals*), as well as his own original material.

The largely unpublished writings in Subseries B, arranged chronologically from 1936-1981, are also predominantly in the form of holograph notebooks, often with multiple works contained in a single notebook. Included are plays, novel fragments, short stories, lyrics, sketches, talks, scripts, notes for musicals, memoirs, articles, and reviews, some of which represent drafts of works present in Subseries A.

The career-related material in Series II includes articles by and about Wilson, newspaper clippings, photographs, programs, scrapbooks, sheet music, sketches, and songs, for the most part not directly related to materials in Series I.

Personal and professional correspondence from 1953-1996 forms the bulk of Series III. Also included are fan mail and correspondence related to Wilson's long-time friend and agent, Joan Rees.

Series I. Works, 1936-1994

Subseries A. Major Works, 1943-1994

Aladdin and the Magic Lamp, musical, Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, Christmas 1979

Notes on libretto and lyrics	box 1 folder 1
Holograph script	folder 2
Rehearsal script	folder 3
Program	folder 4

The Boy Friend, musical, 1952-1994

Lyrics, 1952. Notebook includes lyrics for Watergate Revues "See You Later" and "See You Again," 1951-52, and miscellaneous notes **folder 5**

Script and lyrics for 1st version, 1952; (extra) script and lyrics for 2nd version, 1953 **folder 6**

Score, 1953-54 **folder 7**

Photographs, Broadway production, 1954 **folder 8-9**

Rehearsal script, 1967, Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guilford and Comedy Theatres, London **box 2 folder 1**

Correspondence

1954-1990 **folder 2**

1994, with production-related materials **folder 3**

Programs

British (amateur) **folder 4**

British (professional) **folder 5-6**

Commonwealth and foreign productions **folder 7**

USA (Broadway and elsewhere)	box 3 folder 1-2
<i>The Buccaneer</i> , musical, Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, 1955 and Apollo Theatre, 1976 [see also new lyrics and dialogue for second production contained in holograph notebook with <i>Oh, Henry!</i>]	
Rehearsal script, 2nd version	folder 3
Programs, various productions	folder 4
<i>Caprice</i> , musical based on novel by Ronald Firbank, unproduced, 1971-73	
Holograph script	folder 5-6
Carbon typescript	folder 7
Duplicated typescript	folder 8
<i>Clapham Wonder</i> , musical based on novel <i>The Vet's Daughter</i> by Barbara Comyns; Marlow Theatre, Canterbury, 1978	
Notes on libretto and research for "Harrods" number	folder 9
Holograph script	folder 10
Carbon typescript	box 4 folder 1
Duplicated typescript	folder 2
Rehearsal script	folder 3
Program	folder 4
<i>Divorce Me, Darling!</i> , musical sequel to "The Boy Friend"	
Original score, ms.	folder 5
Script with notes, 1964	folder 6
Revised script, title page marked "Joan Heal," West End version, Globe Theatre, 1965	folder 7
Revised version, 1976?, carbon typescript, Tower Theatre, Islington	folder 8

Correspondence	box 5 folder 1
Programs, reviews, production photographs	folder 2
<i>Gesture</i> , TV play, unproduced, 1985?	
Holograph script	folder 3
Carbon typescript	folder 4
<i>Goodbye to Berlin</i> , musical based on two stories "The Berlin Stories" and "Mr. Norris Changes Trains" by Christopher Isherwood, unproduced, 1963	
Holograph script	folder 5-6
Carbon typescript	folder 7
Correspondence, 1963-67	folder 8
<i>His Monkey Wife</i> , musical based on novel by John Collier, 1971	
Lyrics and notes	box 6 folder 1
Script and notes	folder 2-3
Script with lyrics and re-writes	folder 4
Carbon typescript, first version	folder 5
Final version, Hampstead Theatre Club	folder 6
Correspondence, programs, and reviews	folder 7
<i>I Could Be Happy</i> , autobiography, 1975	
Notes; also notes for play "The Illusionists"	folder 8
Discard chapter, "What Next?," typescript	folder 9
Correspondence and contract	folder 10
<i>The Illusionists</i> , unproduced play, 1975 [see also notes in notebook with <i>I Could Be Happy</i>]	
Holograph script	box 7 folder 1-2

Carbon typescript, 1974?	folder 3
<i>In the Mink</i> , unproduced play, 1959-61	
Notes and research, 1960-61	folder 4
Holograph script, 1959-60	folder 5-7
Carbon typescript, 1960	folder 8
<i>Listen to the Birds</i> , revue lyrics and sketches, 1946-48 for Oxford Experimental Theatre Club and Old Vic Theatre School; musical play based on <i>The Birds</i> by Aristophanes	folder 9
<i>Lydia Languish</i> , [<i>The Rivals</i>], operetta based on Richard Brinsley Sheridan's comedy <i>The Rivals</i>	
Carbon typescript, "A Musical Play," 1948-49	box 8 folder 1
Programs, 1982 Theatre Royal, Bury St. Edmunds	folder 2
<i>My Royal Past</i> , musical based on the book by Cecil Beaton, unproduced, 1955	
Act I	folder 3
Act II	folder 4
Duplicated typescript	folder 5
<i>Not in the Brochure</i> , script, 1980s, TV play based on short story "Luxury Tour" by SW in <i>The Poodle From Rome</i>	folder 6
<i>Now It Can Be Told</i> , carbon typescript, unproduced, 1940	folder 7
<i>Oh, Henry!</i> , musical based on the film <i>Private Life of Henry VIII</i> , unproduced, 1955	
Holograph script	folder 8-9
Final scenes and lyrics; with "The Buccaneer," new lyrics and dialogue for second production	folder 10
1st script, typescript, top copy, 1955	folder 11

Duplicated typescript	folder 12
<i>Oxford's Not What It Used To Be</i> , unfinished, unpublished novel	
1st version, 1948?	
Holograph ms.	box 9 folder 1-2
Typescript	folder 3
2nd version, 1963	
Holograph notes	folder 4
Holograph ms.	folder 5-6
Typescript, top copy	folder 7
<i>Pure Filth</i> , unpublished ms., 1960	box 10 folder 1
<i>The Rivals</i> see Lydia Languish	
<i>Sandy Wilson Thanks the Ladies</i> , correspondence, programs, and reviews	folder 2
<i>Siren Song</i> , musical based on the novel <i>Extraordinary Women</i> by Compton Mackenzie, holograph script, unproduced	folder 3
<i>This Is Sylvia</i> , illustrated book, 1955	
Typescript and illustrations	folder 4
Reviews and publicity	folder 5
<i>Valmouth</i> , musical based on the novel by Ronald Firbank	
Score, holograph ms.	folder 6
Lyrics, 1958	folder 7
Scripts	
Holograph ms., 1958	folder 8-9
Holograph ms.; record reviews and article on Christmas	box 11 folder 1

Final scenes; with article "The British Musical" and Cambridge Union Debate, "There's No Business Like Show Business," 1957	folder 2
Last scene of Act II, 2nd version; with record reviews, 1955-57; Revue lyrics ("Pieces of Eight") 1959; talk on musicals	folder 3
Original version, typescript, top copy, 1958	folder 4
First version, act one, typescript, top copy, 1958	folder 5
Final version, duplicated typescript, 1958	folder 6
TV version (Granada), holograph ms., unproduced	folder 7
Correspondence, 1957-76	folder 8
Chichester, 1982, correspondence, programs and reviews	folder 9
Programs	folder 10
Talks	folder 11
<i>A Wave in the Sea</i> , play based on the life of Isadora Duncan, unproduced, 1944	
Holograph script	box 12 folder 1
Carbon typescript	folder 2
<i>The Way We Are</i> , play, unproduced, 1958	
Holograph script	folder 3-4
Typescript, top copy	folder 5
<i>The Web</i> , playscript, unproduced, 1943	folder 6
Subseries B. Notebooks and Drafts, 1936-1981	
"Enter Aunt Edith," scenes from a lost play, 1936; "Aren't people strange?," unfinished novel, 1940	folder 7
Untitled, unproduced play, 1945	folder 8

Unfinished short stories: "Nobody blames anybody" (1949) and untitled (1950?)	box 13 folder 1
Two untitled, unproduced plays, 1950	folder 2
Notes for unfinished novel; lyrics for revue and cabaret, 1950-53; lyrics for "The Buccaneer" 1953 [see related material above]	folder 3
Revue sketches and lyrics, 1951-52	folder 4
Talk, Oxford (O.U.E.T.C.), typescript, 1955	folder 5
Talk, Cambridge Union, typescript, 1957?	folder 6
Script for TV excerpts from <i>Oh, Henry!</i> , 1958	folder 7
Short stories from <i>The Poodle from Rome</i> , 1962	folder 8-10
Notes and scene from untitled play, 1965; Notes for musical based on "The Last of Mrs. Cheyney," and notes for musical "Amy" based on life of Amy Johnson, both unproduced, 1967	folder 11
Notes on Paris production "Le Boy Friend;" subtitles for Louis Malle's "Viva Maria" and lyrics; talk for World Radio; sundry notes, 1965,	folder 12
Lyrics and notes for "Amy," 1966-67	folder 13
Talks, 1969-70	box 14 folder 1
Untitled memoir of schooldays, prep-school and Harrow, unpublished, 1970	folder 2
Theater reviews (<i>Plays and Players</i>); notes for "Between the Wars," unpublished 1973,	folder 3
Notes for "Ivor" (novello), 1975; Notes for "The Roaring 20s," 1976; theater reviews, 1970s and 1980s (<i>Plays and Players</i> and <i>Plays International</i>)	folder 4
Talk, Streatham; typescript, 1981	folder 5
Articles and talks, typescripts, n.d.	folder 6

Scripts, various titles, holograph ms. and typescripts, unfinished or unproduced,
n.d.

folder 7

Series II. Career-Related Material

Articles by and about SW	box 14 folder 8
Clippings, 1970s-1990s	folder 9
Photographs, production and informal, 1947-1984	box 15 folder 1
Programs, various performances, including "As Dorothy Parker Once Said..." and revues	folder 2
Scrapbooks	
1940-1953 [removed to oversize, Box 18]	
1953-1957 [unfolded bound volume]	
1958-1977 [unfolded bound volume]	
Sheet music, holograph, 1940s-1960s, including "See You Later" and "See You Again"	box 16 folder 1
Songs and sketches, holograph and typescript ms.	folder 2-3

Series III. Correspondence, 1953-1996

A-K	box 17 folder 1
L-P	folder 2
P-Z	folder 3
Fan mail	folder 4
re: "Ivor" [SW's biography of Ivor Novello] and re: caricaturist Einar Nerman	folder 5
Rees, Joan	folder 6
Oversize	box 18

Barcode Index

- 1--059188000171681
- 2--059188000171690
- 3--059188000171703
- 4--059188000171711
- 5--059188000171746
- 6--059188000171801
- 7--059188000171797
- 8--059188000171789
- 9--059188000171771
- 10--059188000171762
- 11--059188000171754
- 12--059188000171720
- 13--059188000171738
- 14--059188000171673
- 15--059188000171665
- 16--059188000171657
- 17--059188000171649
- 18--059188000171819