

Ray Walston:

A Preliminary Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator	Walston, Ray, 1914-2001
Title	Ray Walston Papers
Dates:	1938-1995
Extent	10 boxes, 6 oversize boxes, 1 oversize flat file folder (7.9 linear feet)
Abstract:	This collection contains productions and career-related papers and memorabilia from this noted American actor.
Call Number:	Film Collection (FI-04399)
Language:	English
Access:	Open for research. Researchers must create an online Research Account and agree to the Materials Use Policy before using archival materials.
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Administrative Information

Acquisition	Gift no. 10741
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Processed by Liz Murray, 1997

Repository: [Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin](#)

Scope and Contents

This collection of papers and memorabilia of actor Ray Walston reflects his sixty years on stage, screen, and television, appearing with actors such as Imogene Coca, Bing Crosby, Shelley Duval, Clint Eastwood, Maurice Evans, Jane Fonda, Mitzi Gaynor, Cary Grant, Van Johnson, Janet Leigh, Jack Lemmon, Jerry Lewis, Bela Lugosi, Shirley MacLaine, John Malkovich, Jayne Mansfield, Mary Martin, Lee Marvin, Agnes Moorehead, Sean Penn, Anthony Perkins, Debbie Reynolds, Jean Seberg, Gwen Verdon, Robert Wagner, Robin Williams, and Shelley Winters. While Walston directed some plays in the course of his career, his acting was guided by directors such as George Abbott (*Damn Yankees* and *Me and Juliet*), Robert Altman (*Popeye*), Joshua Logan (*South Pacific* and *Paint Your Wagon*), and Billy Wilder (*Kiss Me, Stupid*). The papers are arranged in two series: Productions and Career-Related Material.

In the first and largest series, Productions, most of Walston's acting appearances are represented, arranged alphabetically by production. This material includes mostly publicity clippings, but also some correspondence, telegrams, scores, playbills, programs, contracts, photographs, and scripts, especially from the *Picket Fences* television series. During the early years of his career (ca. 1938-53), Walston maintained scrapbooks that document his appearances in plays and musicals. After that time, clippings were collected, but not arranged in scrapbooks. Walston's roles vary from star performances to cameo appearances as his career moved from the early days with Margo Jones in Houston to the Cleveland Play House to Broadway, London, and beyond, ending with his role in *Picket Fences*. His two most popular musicals, *South Pacific* and *Damn Yankees* are particularly well represented. Clippings of a general nature, not associated with a particular production, are foldered by decade at the end of the chronological series.

Career-related material in Series II include clippings, photographs, and programs regarding Walston's awards: the 1949 Clarence Derwent Award for the best non-featured performance in *Summer and Smoke*, the 1956 Tony Award for his role in *Damn Yankees*, the 1989 Saturn Life Career Award, and 1994 Emmy nomination for *Picket Fences*. Civic awards and certificates are also included. A small amount of biographical material exists, as well as a few travel receipts, holograph notes, menus, real estate multiple listings, and an issue of *Linotype's Shining Lines*, reminiscent of Walston's early career as a linotypist and reporter. The correspondence includes fan mail, personal notes, postcards, and telegrams of a general nature from 1943-1988. Correspondents include director Josh Logan. Of special interest is a telegram from Princess Margaret at the time of her father's death in February 1952. The King accompanied the royal family to a performance of *South Pacific* at Drury Lane the week before his death.

Clippings regarding Walton's wife Ruth and daughter Katharine Ann ("Kate"), along with a small amount of Kate's school-related material, are found in this series. Informal and publicity photographs are also present, in addition to the stills and production photographs included in Series I. Walston collected a sizeable number of programs and playbills from London performances during his 1951-52 *South Pacific* engagement, as well as smaller amount of domestic programs and tributes to personalities such as Helen

Hayes and Joshua Logan. Scores not included in Series I are present here, especially songs from *Mary Poppins* which Walston recorded in 1964.

The collection is in good condition except for tape damage and some brittle scrapbook material. Two items received with the papers have been transferred to HRHRC's personal effects collection: Walston's brass name plate from his dressing room door at London's Theatre Royal, Drury Lane and the 1992-93 Viewers For Quality Television award for "Best Specialty Player, Quality TV Series" (*Picket Fences*). VHS videos of numerous *Picket Fences* episodes, *My Favorite Martian* episodes, a 1994 TNT "Happy Birthday Ray Walston" tribute, plus *Damn Yankees*, *The Sting*, and Stephen King's *The Stand* were transferred to HRHRC's Film Collection. Issues of magazines such as *Variety*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, and *TV Guide* have been transferred to the HRHRC book collection, along with copies of *My Favorite Martian* comic books. Caricatures drawn for *Damn Yankees*, a watercolor sketch of Walston as "Luther Billis," and a pen and ink drawing of Walston have been transferred to the HRHRC Art Collection.

Series I. Productions

"Agatha Sue, I Love You," play, 1966	box 1 folder 1
"Anything Goes," musical, 1983	folder 2
<i>The Apartment</i> , film, 1960 [*poster removed to oversize flat file]	folder 3*
<i>Canterbury Tales</i> , musical, 1969-70	folder 4
Script	folder 5
"Catch Me If You Can," play, 1974	folder 6
"Come Blow Your Horn," play, 1977	folder 7
<i>Convicts 4</i> also titled <i>Reprieve</i> , film, 1962-63	folder 8
<i>Damn Yankees</i> , musical	
Schubert Theatre, April 1955	folder 9
46th Street Theatre, May 1955-57	folder 10-11
Road shows with Devra Korwin, 1957	box 2 folder 1
Film, 1958	folder 2
Various performances, 1964-82	folder 3
"The Drunkard," play, 1975	folder 4
<i>Fast Times at Ridgemont High</i> , film, 1982	folder 5
<i>From the Hip</i> , film, 1987	folder 6
"The Front Page," play, 1973	folder 7
<i>Hello, Dolly!</i> , musical, 1971	folder 8
<i>House of Flowers</i> , 1954-55	folder 9

<i>Kiss Me, Stupid</i> , film, 1965 [*posters removed to oversize, Box 11]	folder 10-11*
<i>Kiss Me, Stupid</i> , cont'd	box 3 folder 1
<i>Kiss Them for Me</i> , film, 1957	folder 2
<i>The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia</i> , play, 1976	folder 3
<i>The Learned Ladies</i> , play, 1977	folder 4
<i>Me and Juliet</i> , musical, 1953 [*poster removed to oversize flat file and scrapbook removed to oversize, Box 11]	folder 5-6*
"The Mind with the Dirty Man," play, 1976	folder 7
<i>My Favorite Martian</i> , television, 1963-66 [*publicity removed to oversize, Box 11; oversize photographs removed to Box 12]	folder 8-9*
<i>My Favorite Martian</i> , cont'd	box 4 folder 1-4
"My Three Angels," play, 1978	folder 5
"The Odd Couple," play, 1967-68	folder 6
<i>Of Mice and Men</i> , film, 1992	folder 7
<i>Oliver!</i> , musical, 1969	folder 8
<i>Paint Your Wagon</i> , film, 1969 [*production stills removed to oversize, Box 11]	folder 9*
<i>Picket Fences</i> , television series	
Clippings, 1992-95	folder 10
Scripts for specific episodes	
"Away in the Manger," Oct. 1994	folder 11
"Changing of the Guards," Feb. 1995	box 5 folder 1

"Elective Conduct," Aug. 1994	folder 2
"Episode #14," Dec. 1994	folder 3
"Final Judgement," March 1995	folder 4
"For Whom the Wind Blows," Oct. 1994	folder 5
"Frosted Flakes," March 1994	folder 6
"Heroes and Villains," Jan. 1995	folder 7
"Howard's End," March 1994	folder 8
"Mr. Seed Goes to Town," Dec. 1994	folder 9
"Saint Zack," March 1995	folder 10
"System Down," Feb. 1994	folder 11
"Upbringings," March-April 1995	box 6 folder 1
"When in Rome," Jan. 1995	folder 2
<i>Popeye</i> , film, 1980	folder 3
<i>Private School</i> , film, 1983	folder 4
<i>Reprieve</i> see <i>Convicts 4</i>	
"The Rivals," play, 1972	folder 5
"Say One for Me," film, 1959	folder 6
<i>Showboat</i> , musical, 1973	folder 7
<i>South Pacific</i> , musical	
Chicago and London, 1949-52 [*poster signed by the London cast removed to oversize flat file and photographs removed to oversize, Box 11]	folder 8*
Film version, 1958 [*posters removed to oversize flat file]	folder 9*
Production stills	folder 10

Conductor's score	folder 11
St. Louis (1969) and San Diego (1983)	folder 12
Script, RW's director's copy for St. Louis Municipal Opera production	folder 13
<i>The Sting</i> , film, 1973	box 7 folder 1
"The Student Prince," play, 1973	folder 2
<i>Tall Story</i> , film, 1960	folder 3
"Teahouse of the August Moon," play, 1966	folder 4
Television, various appearances, 1953-85 [*photographs removed to oversize, Box 11]	folder 5*
"The Temptation of Maggy Haggerty," play, 1952	folder 6
"Who Was that Lady I Saw You With," play, 1958	folder 7-8
<i>Who's Minding the Store</i> , film, 1963	folder 9
"Wish You Were Here," play, 1952	folder 10
<i>Wives and Lovers</i> , film, 1963	folder 11
"You Know I Can't Hear You when the Water's Running," play, 1969-79	folder 12
Scrapbooks	folder *
Scrapbook, 1938-1943 [*removed to oversize, Box 13]	
Cleveland Play House and Chautauqua Repertory Theater, 1943-1945 [*photograph removed to oversize, Box 11]	box 8 folder 1*
Scrapbook, New York theaters, 1945-May 1949 [*removed to oversize, Box 14]	

Scrapbook, New York cont'd, and National Company tour of *South Pacific*, June 1949-Sept. 1950 [*removed to oversize, Box 15]

Scrapbook, National Company tour, Oct. 1950-Aug. 1951 [*removed to oversize, box 16]

Nov. 1951-Feb. 1952, London production of *South Pacific* with Mary Martin **folder 2-5**

Loose clippings

1950s	box 9 folder 1
1960s	folder 2-3
1970s	folder 4
1980s-1990	folder 5

Series II. Career-related Material

Awards and certificates [*Seattle Zoological Society certificate; photographs related to 1956 Tony Award removed to oversize, Box 11]	box 9 folder 6*
Biographical and miscellaneous personal material	folder 7*
Caricatures, various artists [*removed to oversize flat file]	
Correspondence, 1943-1988	box 10 folder 1
Family publicity and ephemera	folder 2
Photographs, informal and publicity [*oversize photographs removed to Boxes 11 and 12, including RW to Angus McBean]	folder 3*
Playbills and programs of London performances during Walston's 1951-52 <i>South Pacific</i> engagement	folder 4-5
Playbills and programs, various titles	folder 6
Scores and holograph sheet music	folder 7
Oversize material	box 11-17