

# **Joseph Francis Ambrose Jackson scrapbook on theatrical subjects**

Ms. Coll. 1323

**Finding aid prepared by Siel Agugliaro.**

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2017 September 19

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
<b>Creator</b>	Jackson, Joseph, 1867-1946
<b>Title</b>	Joseph Francis Ambrose Jackson scrapbook on theatrical subjects
<b>Call number</b>	Ms. Coll. 1323
<b>Date</b>	1857, 1886-1902
<b>Extent</b>	0.5 linear feet (2 boxes)
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	Joseph Francis Ambrose Jackson (1867-1946) was a historian, lecturer, artist, journalist, and writer active in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This scrapbook contains newspaper clippings on theatrical subjects, dating from 1886 to 1902, and includes reviews, interviews, short biographies, and articles relating to the history of American theater.

**Cite as:**

Joseph Francis Ambrose Jackson scrapbook on theatrical subjects, 1857, 1886-1902, Ms. Coll. 1323, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

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## Biography/History

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Joseph Francis Ambrose Jackson (1867-1946) was a historian, artist, journalist, and writer active in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. At age twelve, he began working as an office boy at the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, where his father was also employed as a printer. He continued in the *Ledger* employ until 1921, after having progressed to writing, reviewing, and editorial work. During his career, Jackson's articles on Philadelphia history and architecture were published in numerous magazines and newspapers, including the *Ledger* itself. He also wrote popular books such as *Market Street, Philadelphia: The Most Historic Highway in America: Its Merchants and Its Story* (1918), *Encyclopedia of Philadelphia* (1931), *Early Philadelphia Architects and Engineers* (1923), and *Literary Landmarks of Philadelphia* (1939). Many of these books first appeared as series in publications such as the *Ledger* or the trade publication *Building*, for which he also served as editor. Jackson is the author of two bibliographies on local writers George Lippard and Charles Godfrey Leland. He wrote articles about the connections of several literary figures to Philadelphia, including Alfred Tennyson, Charles Dickens, Edgar Allan Poe, and William Thackeray, and collected material about some of these authors – especially Poe and Dickens –, as well as on Lewis Carroll, American fiction and drama, and music.

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## Scope and Contents

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The Joseph Francis Ambrose Jackson scrapbook on theatrical subjects was assembled by Jackson beginning in January 1887, as indicated on the first page of the volume. A stamp with Jackson's first initial and last name is also found at the beginning of the volume. The scrapbook contains newspaper clippings on theatrical topics, from 1886 to 1902. The majority of the clippings, covering the years from 1886 to 1891 – with a final article from 1894 – were pasted in chronological order on the pages of the scrapbook, which was in turn derived from original issues of the *New York Journal of Romance, General Literature and Art*, (previously *Frank Leslie's New York Journal*), published between 1855 and 1857. Although the scrapbook contains a few articles from London papers (especially *The Pall Mall Gazette*), most of the clippings were excerpted from newspapers published in New York City and Philadelphia, such as *The New York Times*, *New York World*, *New-York Tribune*, *Harper's Weekly*, *Philadelphia Evening Telegraph*, *Public Ledger*, and *The Philadelphia Press*. Because of that, the scrapbook tends to focus on the theatrical happenings of these two cities. However, the volume also includes interviews, short biographies, and articles on the history of American theater, which makes this scrapbook a useful resource to anybody interested in the history of theater in the United States at large.

The scrapbook includes several reviews of shows which appeared in Philadelphia and New York City, along with a few clippings on London productions. Notable articles include those about the performances of actor Henry Irving in Philadelphia; a festival in honor of Lester Wallack at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City; and reviews of Edwin Booth's performances in Broadway shows. A few articles focus more specifically on theatrical life and events in Philadelphia, including the opening of new theaters such as the Empire Theatre and the Girard Avenue Theatre. Another clipping offers statistics on the number of attendees of Philadelphia shows in the early 1890s. The loose clippings, originally laid into the volume, offer additional reviews, such as those of comedian Joseph Jefferson at the Broad Street Theatre (Philadelphia), and of other productions in London, Paris, and New York City. Nonprofessional productions of classical or ancient plays are also featured. An article on the performance of ancient Greek plays at the Academy of Music of Philadelphia by University of Pennsylvania undergraduates is included in the scrapbook (box 1), while reviews of old English plays revived in New Haven, CT, by Yale university students, can be found in box 2.

The list of interviewed artists and personalities include actors Clara Morris, Lotta Crabtree, Lydia Thompson, Henry Irving, Stuart Robson, Louise Beaudet, the minstrel Billy Birch, and the impresarios John McCaull and Edmund Stanton. In other articles, actors Wilson Barrett, William J. "Billy" Florence, Georgie Drew Barrymore, and Marie Halton tell about their own experience with the stage. The loose clippings include more interviews, such as one granted by actress Fanny Janauschek at the end of her career, as well as reminiscences of other theatrical figures, including comedian Digby Bell. In the volume, researchers will find biographical sketches on actors Louisa Eldridge, Edwin Booth, and Madame Ponisi (Elizabeth Ponisi Wallis), as well as Agnes Robertson Boucicault's memories of her husband, actor and playwright Dion Boucicault. Additional articles on Joseph Jefferson, Tony Pastor, Richard Mansfield, Charles Hale Hoyt, and other theatrical figures can be found in the folders accompanying the scrapbook (box 2).

A number of clippings offer researchers a glimpse of gender and race relationships in the theatrical world at the end of the 19th century. The scrapbook contains articles on women theater managers and on women playwrights of American birth (including Martha Morton, Anne Dickinson, Kate Field, and others), while another article discusses the respectability of acting as a possible career for women. Other clippings in the volume focus on the career of several African-American actors (including Ira Aldridge, A. J. Arneaux, Henrietta Vinton Davis, and Alice Franklin) and the plans to open a new "theater for the colored people" in Philadelphia, at the initiative of black actor R. Henri Strange. The scrapbook also includes an article by journalist and folklorist Joel Chandler Harris on minstrel shows, and a piece on the history and aesthetics of Japanese theatre. Articles in box 2 include an article on Chinese actress Yut Gum, "the Chinese Bernhardt", as well as a review of a Japanese play performed at the Berkeley Lyceum Theatre in New York City, and an article on the popularity of Italian opera.

The collection also includes a few articles on aspects relating to staging, makeup, costume design, and, more generally, to the history of American drama. The scrapbook includes articles on theatrical slang, stage mechanics, and electricity. Another article discusses the history of the stage costume for the character of Hamlet, with portraits of famous actors who impersonated him (among others, Richard Burrage, Thomas Betterton, David Garrick, Edmund Kean, John Philip Kemble, Junius Brutus Booth, Charles Kean, Edwin Forrest, William Charles Macready, Edwin Booth, Lawrence Barrett, Henry Irving, and Jean Mounet-Sully). Researchers will find another article on the art of makeup in box 2, along with an essay by Frédéric Febvre on the state of dramatic art. Finally, a series on "Forgotten Actors," originally published in *The New York Times* between 1886 and 1887, and pasted in the scrapbook, includes articles on individuals, institutions, and events connected with the history of early American theater.

Most of the pages of the original *New York Journal* were used as a support for clippings from other sources. However, a few of them were left free in order to preserve some relevant materials on theater subjects published in the 1850s. Among such materials are a series on theatrical "costumes of all nations," and a few plays (including the comedy *Love in Humble Life*, by John Howard Payne, the interlude *Mischief-Making*, the farce *The Spoiled Child*, by Prince Hoare, and *Shylock, or the Merchant of Venice Preserved*, by Francis Talfourd). A handwritten note by Jackson listing the board of managers of the Edwin Forrest Home (Philadelphia), was pasted on the last page of the volume.

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## Administrative Information

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2017 September 19

Finding aid prepared by Siel Agugliaro.

### **Access Restrictions**

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### **Source of Acquisition**

Purchased through the 1894 College Memorial Fund on January 21, 1922.

### **Processing Information note**

Formerly Dewey 812H J135.

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## **Related Materials**

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### **Related Archival Materials note**

At the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania: Joseph Francis Ambrose Jackson manuscripts and notes, 1906, undated, Ms. Coll. 1220.

At the Historical Society of Pennsylvania: Joseph Jackson manuscripts, 1863-1930.

At the Philadelphia History Museum: Joseph F. A. Jackson Papers, circa 1800-1945.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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CORPORATE NAME(S)

- 1894 College Memorial Fund.

### **FORM/GENRE(S)**

- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Interviews
- Plays (performed works)
- Reviews (documents)
- Scrapbooks

### **GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)**

- Philadelphia (Pa.)--Social life and customs

### **SUBJECT(S)**

- Actors
- Actresses
- Gender, racism, ethnicity
- Performing arts
- Theater
- Theater--United States--19th century

## Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
Scrapbook, 1857, 1886-1894.	1	
Loose clippings (originally laid into scrapbook), 1886-1894.	2	1
Loose clippings (originally laid into scrapbook), 1895-1899.	2	2
Loose clippings (originally laid into scrapbook), 1900-1902.	2	3