

# **Elsie Randolph Collection**

**Reference:  
MS490**

## Elsie Randolph Collection

MS490

Elsie Randolph Collection

1923-1982

Correspondence, diaries and address book, personal and publicity photographs including album of 1932, typescript acting copy part of 'Marian Kane' at the Lyric Theatre and French's acting editions of 'Dear Charles' by Alan Melville and 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime' both signed and annotated by Randolph; theatre programmes for productions in which she appeared; and small collection of greeting cards, mostly blank; personal papers belonging to Elsie Randolph's husband, Leopold Vernon Page.

Her personal correspondence includes letters from Jack Buchanan, 1923-1947, Alan Melville, 1970, Cole Lesley, 1961 and letters of condolence and cards and associated papers relating to the death of her husband, Leopold Vernon Page, 1959-1961.

Her diaries survive for the years 1923, 1960, 1971, 1974, 1975 and [1977].

**Administrative history:** Elsie Randolph (1904-1982), actress, worked with Jack Buchanan (1890-1957), actor and singer, in a number of successful West End musical comedies, including 'Sunny' (1926), 'Wake Up and Dream' (1929), 'Mr. Wittington' (1934) and 'It's Time to Dance' (1943); and appeared together in four films based on their shows: 'That's a Good Girl' (1933), 'Yes, Mr. Brown' (1933), 'This'll Make You Whistle' (1936) and 'Smash and Grab' (1937). She also appeared in other films and shows including Alfred Hitchcock's *Rich and Strange* (1932). Her last appearance was on television in series 'Edward and Mrs Simpson' (1980), in which she played Lady Colefax. In 1945 she married, stockbroker, Leopold Vernon Page and largely retired from show business but after his death in 1959 she returned to acting roles in theatre and television.

Source: [http://www.collectorspost.com/cgi-bin/ShopLoader.cgi?Actors/elsie\\_randolph.html](http://www.collectorspost.com/cgi-bin/ShopLoader.cgi?Actors/elsie_randolph.html) (accessed November 2007)

1 box

## Elsie Randolph Collection

Access: Open

**Access conditions:** Access to all registered researchers

**Copyright:** Permission to make any published use of any material from the collection must be sought in advance in writing from the Director of Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections (email: special-collections@bham.ac.uk). Identification of copyright holders of unpublished material is often difficult. Cadbury Research Library will assist where possible with identifying copyright owners, but responsibility for ensuring copyright clearance rests with the user of the material

**Language:** English

**Creator name:** Elsie Randolph (1904-1982), actress

**Custodial history:** This collection was formerly part of the Herbert Schimmel Noel Coward and Ivor Novello collections

**Acquisition:** Purchased from a bookseller in 1999

**Related material:** Other materials formerly part of the Herbert Schimmel Noel Coward and Ivor Novello collections were purchased at the same time including Noel Coward Theatre Programmes (MS491); Gladys Calthrop costume drawings (MS492); Noel Coward posters (MS497); Noel Coward and Ivor Novello Miscellaneous Cuttings (MS498); Patricia Hollender Collection (MS500)

MS490/1	Correspondence 6 files Access: Open	1923-1982
MS490/1/1	Letters from Jack Buchanan  These letters, telegram and postcard to Elsie from Jack Buchanan were written mostly while on performance tours abroad or from holidays. Many of the letters date from the mid 1920s	1923-1947

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when Jack Buchanan was starring in New York productions of Charlot Revues. At this time he was also involved in the management of musical theatre productions and his letters make reference to his plans for casting of shows he planned to stage. His letters to Elsie, who was then a young actress looking to advance her career, already reveal an intimate friendship and later a romance between them. Buchanan always called Elsie by a pet name in his letters to her and signed himself 'Daddy'. In a letter from the Selwyn Theatre, 229 West 42nd Street dating probably from this period he writes: 'Daddy has bought the biggest musical success they've ever had here, 'Sunny' though I'm trying to keep it quiet for a little.' It was this show in 1926 which first brought Elsie Randolph and Jack Buchanan together in their famous stage partnership.

/1: Letter with envelope postmarked 18 December 1923 from on board RMS Caronia sailing to America

/2-4: Three undated letters written from Glasgow where Buchanan often premiered his own shows at the Alhambra Theatre.

/5: Letter, undated from Dominion Hotel, Avignon France

/6: Letter, undated, from Hotel Statler, St Louis, USA

/7: Pencilled note, undated, no heading [from New York] sending by sea

/8: Letter, undated, stamped 'Empire Theatre London by arrangement with Alfred Butt Jack Buchanan presents his new musical show 'Boodle'; hopes to see her on Sunday

/9: Letter, undated, from Riverside Drive, New York on Selwyn Theatre notepaper

/10: Letter, undated, from Riverside Drive, New York

/11: Letter, undated from Selwyn Theatre (1925?)

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/12: Letter, undated from Hotel Algonquin, New York

/13: Letter [from New York] with envelope postmarked 25 February 1924 to Elsie at Dalys Theatre, Leicester Square

/14: Letter [from New York] with two envelopes postmarked January-February 1926 to Elsie c/o Charlot's Revue, Hippodrome, Boscombe

/15: Letter from 50 Central Park West, New York, with envelope postmarked 8 March 1924

/16-17: Letter, undated, [from New York]

/18-19: Two letters, undated [1926] from Hollywood, California

/20: Letter, undated, from onboard RMS Aquitania about to sail for America

/21: Letter with envelope postmarked 7 September 1929, annotated 'Jack's silly letter when I let him take 'Boodle' with him to Scotland'

/22: Telegram 15 April 1930 from Hollywood

/23: Preprinted field service post card 1 February 1940

/24: Postcard postmarked 17 January 1947 from the Bahamas

1 file

Access: Open

MS490/1/2      Letters and messages of condolence      1959-1961

/1-36: Letters and messages of condolence on the death of Elsie Randolph's husband, Leopold Vernon Page, including Cole Lesley

/37: cards with messages sent with funeral tributes including Dame Anna Neagle; /38: printed 'In Memoriam ' cards

1 file, 2 bundles

Access: Open

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- |           |   |           |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| MS490/1/3 | Correspondence with Worthing Rural District Council   | 1961-1962 |
|           | <p>/1-11: Correspondence and related papers concerning dispute with Worthing Rural District Council over drainage ditches in the area of Anmering -on-Sea, Sussex, specifically affecting Elsie Randolph's property</p> <p>1 file</p> <p>Access: Open</p>   |           |
| MS490/1/4 | Letters from Alan Melville  | 1970      |
|           | <p>/1-6: Letters from script writer, playwright and lyricist, Alan Melville concerning his invitation to Elsie Randolph to take part in a proposed BBC television series of dramas to be called 'Brighton Belle'. Melville was to act as executive producer of the series and write most of the episodes and included a synopsis of the episode he was to write for Elsie</p> <p>1 file</p> <p>Access: Open</p>   |           |
| MS490/1/5 | Miscellaneous personal correspondence   | 1936-1982 |
|           | <p>Miscellaneous personal correspondence including:</p> <p>/1: Letter, dated 1 September 1980, signed 'Michael' urging Elsie to write a biography of Jack Buchanan. This letter appears to have been written in the wake of a recently screened television programme on Jack Buchanan and in response to the biography 'Top Hat and Tails' by Sir Robert Michael Marshall published in 1979, the writer expressing his view that Elsie could provide a more complete picture of Buchanan's life and the truth behind their stage partnership and personal relationship.</p> <p>Other correspondence includes letters from friends, some from the theatrical and entertainment world, such as:</p> <p>/10: Norman Winston, New York, 19 January 1961; /14: Jack de Manio of the BBC 11</p> |           |

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December 1961 /15-16: Laney Holloway, on the death of her husband Stanley Holloway 1982

1 file

Access: Open

MS490/1/6 Letter and postcards written by Elsie Randolph [1937]

/1: Letter, dated 13 September [1937], written from the Gotham Hotel, New York, to 'Darling Minnie (?)' in which she describes her impressions of America and socialising with her theatre friends including Noel [Noel Coward], Bea [Beatrice Lillie] Adele Dixox, Norman and Rosita Winston and refers to going to see Gertrude Lawrence's opening night [in *Susan and God*] in Washington

/2: Postcard, undated, showing the Shoreham Terrace, Washington

/3: Postcard, undated, showing aeroplane in which Elsie flew [back from Washington to New York]

3 items

Access: Open

MS490/2 Personal papers 1935-1977

7 files

Access: Open

MS490/2/1 Papers relating to Leopold Vernon Page 1937-1960

/1: Leopold Vernon Page's expired passport issued 1937

/2: Medical certificate issued on behalf of Dr J. E. Wolf, Waldsanatorium, Davos, Switzerland, dated 11 April 1940

/3-4: Prospectuses for the Waldsanatorium, Davos, Switzerland c 1940

/5: Telegram sent by Vernon Page from Davos

/6: Invoice for foreign currency exchange, dated

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16 May 1949

/7-8: Letter to Elsie, dated 26 January 1960 relating to his life assurance payment after his death, with draft of her reply

/9: Exercise book containing tables recording dates and travel information for routes between London and Switzerland

/10: Document wallet from the Hotel Atlantico, Monte Estoril, Portugal

1 file

Access: Open

MS490/2/2      Miscellaneous papers      1964-1977

/1: Printed letter, dated 27 April 1964, from resident group objecting to London County Council development plans in Kensington

/2: Papers from ATV Network Ltd relating to the recording schedule for an episode of 'Fraud Squad' 25 August [1970]

/3: News cutting from local press relating to Elsie Randolph's role in a production of 'The Cure For Love' at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, 1977

1 file

Access: Open

MS490/2/3      Valentine cards      c 1950s

/1-7: Collection of Valentine cards, mostly blank

1 file

Access: Open

MS490/2/4      Greetings cards      c 1950-1970

/1-14: Collection of various greetings cards, mostly blank

1 file

Access: Open



## Elsie Randolph Collection

- MS490/2/5      Address book      c 1935-1960
- Address book containing names and addresses of Elsie Randolph's friends and theatre and television contacts in UK and America including Noel Coward and Beatrice Lillie.
- 1 volume
- Access: Open
- MS490/2/6      Theatre programmes      c 1936-1968
- Programmes for theatre productions featuring Elsie Randolph:
- /1: 'This'll Make You Whistle' Golders Green Hippodrome 1936
- /2: 'Room For Two' Comedy Theatre, London [1938]
- /3: 'Dear Charles' Connaught Theatre, Worthing, 25 October 1954
- /4: 'Nest of Robins' Connaught Theatre, Worthing 22 April 1957
- /5: 'The Amorous Prawn' Palace Theatre, Westcliffe-on-Sea, 1967
- /6: 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime' Ashcroft Theatre, Fairfield Halls, Croydon, 1968
- 6 items
- Access: Open
- MS490/2/7      Scripts for stage roles played by Elsie Randolph      1943-1963
- Elsie Randolph's signed and annotated personal copies of scripts for stage performances
- /1: Typescript acting copy part of 'Marian Kane' in 'It's Time to Dance' at the Lyric Theatre, London, 1943
- /2-3: French's acting editions of 'Dear Charles' by Alan Melville, 1953 and 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime ' by Constance Cox, 1963

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3 items

Access: Open

MS490/3 Photographs c 1923-1977

1 volume, 1 file

Access: Open

MS490/3/1 Photograph album c 1932-1959

Photograph album plus loose inserts of photographs of Elsie and others including her mother and Leopold Vernon Page

1 volume

Access: Open

MS490/3/2 Publicity photographs c 1923-1977

/1-6: Publicity photographs of Elsie Randolph including one as Lady Sybil Colefax for the television serial 'Edward and Mrs Simpson', 1978

1 file

Access: Open

MS490/4 Diaries 1923-1977

/1-6: Elsie Randolph's pocket diaries for 1923, 1960, 1971 and [1977]; engagement diaries for 1974 and 1975 with daily entries

6 volumes

Access: Open