

Maclyn Arbuckle:

A Preliminary Inventory of His Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Arbuckle, Maclyn, 1866-1931
Title:	Maclyn Arbuckle Collection
Dates:	1882-1990 (bulk 1882-1931)
Extent:	4 document boxes, 1 oversize box (3.36 linear feet), 1 oversize folder (osf)
Abstract:	The Maclyn Arbuckle Collection consists of certificates, clippings, correspondence, diaries, film stills, letterhead, manuscript drafts, maps, notes, photographs, press releases, scripts, and theater programs belonging to the actor and producer Maclyn Arbuckle and his father, James Graeme Arbuckle.
Call Number:	Film Collection FI-54165
Language:	English and Spanish.
Access:	Open for research. Please note: Light sensitive materials must be viewed under low-level lighting. Some materials may be restricted from viewing. To make an appointment or to reserve photography materials, please email Reading and Viewing Room staff. Researchers must create an online Research Account and agree to the Materials Use Policy before using archival materials.
Use Policies:	Ransom Center collections may contain material with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal or state right to privacy laws and regulations. Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in the collections without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications (e.g., a cause of action under common law for invasion of privacy may arise if facts concerning an individual's private life are published that would be deemed highly offensive to a reasonable person) for which the Ransom Center and The University of Texas at Austin assume no responsibility.
Restrictions on Use:	Authorization for publication is given on behalf of the University of Texas as the owner of the collection and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder which must be obtained by the researcher. For more information please see the Ransom Center's Open Access and Use Policies.

Administrative Information

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

Scope and Contents

The Maclyn Arbuckle Collection documents the personal and professional activities of silent film and theater actor and producer Maclyn Arbuckle, and his father James Graeme Arbuckle. The collection particularly documents Arbuckle's acting career (1888-1924) and production career (1918-1922).

Maclyn Arbuckle, cousin of Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle, was born in San Antonio, Texas, on July 9, 1866. Arbuckle was admitted to the bar at Texarkana shortly after completing law school but after an unsuccessful campaign for Justice of the Peace of Bowie County in 1888, left his career in law after one year to pursue acting. That same year, Arbuckle premiered in his first role in Shreveport, Louisiana, and acted consistently on the stage until the mid-1920s. Some of his most famous theatrical roles include "Jim Hackler" in *The County Chairman* (1903-1907) and "Slim Hoover" in *The Round-Up* (1907). Other roles include parts in *Men and Women* (1892-1894), *Why Smith Left Home* (1898), *Misalliance* (1917), *Daddy Dumplins* (1921), *Wild Oats Lane* (1923), and *Poor Richard* (1924). In 1918, he helped found the film production company San Antonio Pictures Corporation. As its president and star actor, he produced a repertoire of "Maclyn Arbuckle Photo Plays"—short silent films that included *The Prodigal Judge* (1922), a role for which he garnered accolades. He starred in other films in the 1910s and 1920s, including *The Reform Candidate* (1915), *Squire Phin* (1922), *Welcome to Our City* (1922), *Mr. Potter of Texas* (1922), *Mr. Bingle* (1922), *The Young Diana* (1922), and *Janice Meredith* (1924). Arbuckle lived with his wife, Elizabeth Sheldon Carlisle (married 1903), at their home in Waddington, New York until his death on March 31, 1931.

The papers are organized into two series: I. Maclyn Arbuckle, 1882-1990, undated; and II. James Graeme Arbuckle, 1890-1909, undated. The bulk of the collection is related to Maclyn Arbuckle and Series I contains clippings, correspondence, diaries, letterhead, manuscript drafts, notes, photographs, press releases, scripts, and theater programs. Subseries A. Productions contains clippings, notes, photographs, and scripts related to Arbuckle's many film and theater productions and is arranged alphabetically by title.

Many of the productions in Subseries A were presented as both theatrical and film productions; often with different titles. For example, *Daddy Dumplins* is the theater version of the later film *Mr. Bingle*. Some photographs are pasted on leaves from a disbound scrapbook and have images from two different productions glued to opposite sides of the same page. In most cases, these have been filed by whichever production appears first alphabetically. Subseries A also includes a selection of light-sensitive unfixed proof photographs from an unmarked production, which appears to be *The County Chairman*. These photos must be viewed in a special low-lighting environment; please contact the Reading and Viewing Room staff for further guidance when requesting these materials. In addition to material arranged alphabetically by production title, the series contains a folder of production reviews and other clippings formerly housed in envelopes that is preserved in its original order.

Subseries B contains sixteen diaries kept by Arbuckle over the course of his life. These begin in 1882 when Arbuckle was a teenager in boarding school and continue through his brief legal career and the early stages of his acting career. Arbuckle meticulously kept and labeled his diaries, and the organization reflects his original order. Many of the diaries include clippings and other personal material that have been pasted directly onto the pages. In most cases, these clippings have been left in place for preservation and organization reasons; clippings found between blank pages were removed and sleeved in the same folder as the diaries.

Subseries C. Personal and Career Material includes a small quantity of personal and professional items, including acting association membership cards, clippings, playbills for productions, personal stationery, and a poster for an auction held at Arbuckle's farm in Waddington, New York. A small volume of incoming and outgoing correspondence regarding contractual and personal matters is present, as well as Arbuckle's correspondence with his wife and parents. This subseries also includes posed and candid photographs of Arbuckle around San Antonio, a multitude of headshots, photographs of members of the San Antonio Pictures Corporation and The Bohemian Club, and photographs of Arbuckle posing with lion cubs at the Chicago Zoo kept by zookeeper Cy DeVry. Subseries C also contains various works by Arbuckle including scripts, one-act plays, and other notes for productions that are not represented elsewhere in the collection.

Series II. James Graeme Arbuckle contains certificates, clippings, correspondence, manuscript drafts, and maps related to the professional life of Maclyn Arbuckle's father, who served as royal vice-consul for Spain and was knighted by the King of Spain for his work in encouraging improved trade relations between the United States and Latin America. Of interest are the clippings and letters related to a 1907 performance of a play about the founding of the state of Texas. During the climactic scene about the fall of the Alamo, an audience member rolled a cabbage onto the stage. In response, James Arbuckle got into a physical altercation with the audience member, calling the actions "an insult... to the flag of Texas." As many of the clippings and correspondence demonstrate, Arbuckle was widely lauded for his actions. This series also includes a 1910 certificate attesting to Arbuckle's Spanish knighthood and an undated map of the ground plan of the estate of Santa Catalina del Río near Oaxaca, Mexico.

Content warning: This collection contains material that users may consider offensive or harmful, such as terminology, language, and negative stereotypes that may be considered racist, sexist, outdated, or exclusionary. This language was used by the people and organizations that created the material and reflects the period in which they were created. It should not be interpreted to mean that Center staff endorse or approve of the representations or stereotypes implied within. For more, please refer to the Center's [Statement on Language in Ransom Center Descriptive Records](#).

Related Material

The Norman Bel Geddes Papers include material related to the play *Poor Richard* (1924), starring Maclyn Arbuckle.

Series I. Maclyn Arbuckle, 1882-1990, undated

Subseries A. Productions, 1890-1924, undated

Film

The County Chairman (1914), clippings, 1905-1914	Container 1.19
Fighting Mad (1919), photographs, undated	Container 1.1, 1.18
It's No Laughing Matter (1915), photographs, undated	Container 1.2
Janice Meredith (1924), clippings, undated	Container 1.3
Mr. Bingle (theater title Daddy Dumplins) (1922), photographs, 1919-1922, undated	Container 1.4, 1.18
Mr. Blunder (1917), scripts and notes, undated	Container 1.5
Mr. Potter of Texas (1922)	Container
Clippings, 1922	Container 1.6
Photographs, 1919, undated	Container 1.7, 1.18
Script, undated	Container 1.8
The Prodigal Judge (1922), clippings and photographs, 1921-1922, undated	Container 1.9
The Reform Candidate (working title Home and Politics) (1915), photographs, 1916-1919, undated	Container 1.10
Squire Phin (1922)	
Clippings, 1921-1922	Container 1.11
Photographs, 1919, undated	Container 1.12
Welcome to Our City (1922)	
Clippings, undated	Container 1.13
Photographs, 1919-1920, undated	Container 1.14

The Young Diana (1922), clippings, 1921-1922, undated	Container 1.15
Theater	
All the Comforts of Home (1895), printed material, 1895	Container 1.16
Back Home (1914), photographs, 1918, undated	Container 1.17
The Circus Man (1908-1909), photographs, undated	Container 1.18
The County Chairman (1903-1907)	
Clippings, photographs, and programs, 1905-1914, undated	Container 1.19, 2.18
Stills of Arbuckle from The County Chairman (?), unfixed proof photographs, undated. Please note: Light sensitive materials must be viewed under low-level lighting.	Container 1.20
Daddy Dumplins (film title Mr. Bingle) (1920-1921)	
Clippings, 1920, undated	Container 1.21
Photographs, 1920-1921	Container 1.4
Dan Folan's Lions Review (1919), photographs, 1919	Container 2.1
The Gentleman from Texas (1900), script, undated	Container 1.22
The Henrietta (1915-1917), photographs, undated	Container 2.1
His Own Medicine (unproduced?), script, undated	Container 2.2
Ingomar! (1890-1891), printed material, undated	Container 2.3
Julius Caesar (1895), clippings, 1895-1896, undated	Container 2.4
Lord and Lady Algy (1917-1918), clippings, 1918	Container 2.5
A Lost Paradise (date unknown), clippings, undated	Container 2.6
Lovers (1921), script, 1921	Container 2.7
The Man from Mexico (1897), printed material, 1897-1898, undated	Container 2.8

Men and Women (1892-1894), clippings, 1896, undated	Container 2.9
The Merry Martyr (1913), clippings, 1913	Container 2.10
Misalliance (1917), clippings and photographs, 1915-1917, undated	Container 2.11
Moths (1895), printed material, 1895	Container 2.12
My Woman, or Thine? (unproduced?), script, undated	Container 2.13
Poor Richard (1924), clippings, 1924, undated	Container 2.14
The Reform Candidate (1912)	
Clippings, press releases and printed material, 1912, undated	Container 2.15
Script and notes, undated	Container 2.16
The Round-Up (1907-1909)	
Clippings, 1910-1912, undated	Container 2.17
Photographs, 1907, undated	Container 2.18
The Senator (1894)	
Clippings, 1895, undated	Container 2.19
Photographs, undated	Container 1.18
The Sheriff and the Kid (1918), script and notes	Container 2.20
Shylock: Before the Court of Appeals (unproduced?), script, undated	Container 2.21
Skipper and Co. (1903), script, undated	Container 2.22
The Sprightly Romance of Marsac (1900-1901), script, undated	Container 2.23
Under Two Flags (1900-1901), photographs	Container 1.18
We the People pageant (1920), clippings and programs, 1920	Container 2.24

The Welcher (1911), clippings and programs, 1911-1918, undated	Container 2.25
What's Your Husband Doing? (1917), photographs, 1917	Container 2.26
Why Smith Left Home (1898-1900)	
Clippings, 1899-1900, undated	Container 2.27
Photograph, 1898	Container osb 1.1
Wild Oats Lane (1922-1923), clippings, 1922, undated	Container 2.28
Clippings of reviews of various film and theater productions, clippings about Arbuckle, 1907-1923, undated	Container 2.29
Subseries B. Diaries, 1882-1895	
1882-1887	Container 2.30-31, 3.1
1891-1892	Container 3.2-3
1892-1893	Container 3.4-6
1894-1895	Container 4.1
Subseries C. Personal and Career Material, 1882-1990	
Business and personal letterhead, undated	Container 4.2
Collected material	
Clippings (biographical, poems, op-eds, etc.)	
Clippings about Arbuckle, 1896-1990, undated	Container 4.3, osb 1.2
Other clippings, 1903-1940, undated	Container 4.4, osb 1.3-5
Programs and printed material, 1894-1928, undated	Container 4.5
Correspondence	
Incoming, 1903-1931, undated	Container 4.6
Arbuckle to wife Elizabeth, 1895-1931, undated	Container 4.7

Outgoing, 1882-1909	Container 4.8
Photographs	
Head shots, 1888-1915, undated	Container 4.9, 1.4, 1.14, 2.1, 2.11
Personal and professional, 1918-1920, undated	Container 4.10, 1.7, 1.17, 2.25
Works, 1891, undated	Container 4.11

Series II. James Graeme Arbuckle, 1890-1910, undated

Certificate from the King of Spain granting James Graeme Arbuckle knighthood in San Sebastian, Spain on 5 September 1910 **Container**
osb 1.6

Clippings, 1907-1909, undated **Container** 4.12

Correspondence, 1890-1907 **Container** 4.13

Map of the ground plan of the lands of the estate of Santa Catalina del Río, undated **Container**
osf 1

Works, undated **Container** 4.14

Container 4.15 Empty envelopes (contained production clippings), undated