

# Guide to the Alfred de Liagre Papers

MS 1474



compiled by Susan Brady, Rachel Pomerantz, and staff of Manuscripts and Archives

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
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**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1474

**CREATOR:** De Liagre, Alfred, 1904-1987

**TITLE:** Alfred de Liagre papers

**DATES:** 1927-1987

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 4.75 linear feet (6 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers contain correspondence, manuscripts and typescripts, photographs, and printed material relating to the career of Alfred de Liagre as theatrical producer and director.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1474>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1474>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Mrs. Alfred de Liagre, 1987; Christina de Liagre, 2010.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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## Preferred Citation

Alfred de Liagre Papers (MS 1474). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Alfred Gustav Etienne de Liagre was born on October 6, 1904 in Passaic, New Jersey, the son of Alfred and Frida (Unger) de Liagre. He was a graduate of the Riverdale Country School in New York City (1922), and Yale University (1926).

After brief careers in aviation, banking, and journalism, de Liagre entered the theatrical profession in 1930 as a stage hand at the Woodstock Playhouse, and as a stage manager for a production of *Twelfth Night* at Maxine Elliott's Theatre in New York. With his 1933 production of *Three Cornered Moon*, de Liagre began a career as a Broadway producer and director which spanned fifty-four years and included over forty stage and screen productions.

Among de Liagre's most successful productions were *The Voice of the Turtle* by John Van Druten, which de Liagre directed and co-produced with Richard Aldrich; Giradoux's *Madwoman of Chaillot*, which received the New York Drama Critics Circle Award in 1949; *The Golden Apple*, which received the "Best Musical" award of the New York Drama Critics in 1954; the 1958 production of Archibald MacLeish's *J.B.*, which received the Tony Award; *Deathtrap*, which was produced in 1978, and was the longest running comedy thriller in Broadway history; and the revival of the Rogers and Hart musical *On Your Toes* which received the Tony Award in 1983.

De Liagre's film credits include *Springtime for Henry*, which he directed in 1934, *The Voice of the Turtle*, which he produced in 1947, and *Deathtrap* which he produced in 1981.

In addition to his Broadway productions, de Liagre produced a number of revivals in the late 1960s and 1970s for the Plumstead Playhouse, which he assisted in founding, and the American National Theatre and Academy, for which he served as executive director.

De Liagre was on the board of directors of the League of New York Theatres, the Actors Fund of America, the National Repertory Theatre, the American Theatre Wing, and the Julliard School, and was chairman of the School of Drama division of the Yale University Council. He was a member of the Century Club and of the Century's Round Table.

For his 1949 production of *Madwoman of Chaillot*, de Liagre was made a Chevalier in the French Legion of Honor. He was elected to the Theater Hall of Fame in 1984.

De Liagre was married to actress Mary Howard in 1945, and was the father of Christina and Nicholas de Liagre. Alfred de Liagre died on March 5, 1987.

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## Scope and Contents

The Alfred de Liagre Papers contain correspondence, manuscripts and typescripts, printed material, and photographs relating to de Liagre's career as a Broadway theater producer and director. The papers are arranged in three series and one addition: I. Correspondence, II. Subject Files, III. Photographs.

The bulk of Series I, CORRESPONDENCE, includes de Liagre's correspondence with playwrights, actors, and directors relating to his own productions and those of others. De Liagre's correspondence with John Van Druten regarding *The Voice of the Turtle* (folders 2-10 and 40-42) forms the largest group of letters relating to a single production. Other correspondents include Elmer Rice (folders 8 and 9), Clive Brook (folders 13-16), Beth Wendel and Aldous Huxley (folders 16-19), and Archibald MacLeish (folders 19-21). Included in the correspondence dating from 1970 to 1987 are letters that document de Liagre's involvement with the American National Theatre and Academy, the Century Club, and other professional and social organizations.

Series II, SUBJECT FILES, consists of manuscripts and typescripts of speeches and reminiscences, printed material, clippings, and legal and financial documents relating to de Liagre's personal and professional interests. The bulk of the material consists of clippings and programs relating to de Liagre's stage productions.

Series III, PHOTOGRAPHS, and the addition, consist of photoprints of de Liagre, individual actors and actresses, and theatrical productions.

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## Arrangement

The papers are arranged in three series and one addition: I. Correspondence, II. Subject Files, III. Photographs.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: CORRESPONDENCE, 1937-1986

1' (2 boxes)

This series contains material arranged chronologically. Undated material is arranged alphabetically by sender at the end of the series.

b. 1, f. 1-22	1937, 1939, 1943-1949, 1950 June-Dec, undated, 1951-1959, 1961-1962, 1966, 1968, 1970-1974	1937, 1939, 1943-1949, 1950 June-Dec, undated, 1951-1959, 1961-1962, 1966, 1968, 1970-1974
b. 2, f. 23-38	1975-1984 Oct, 1985 January-1986 June	1975-1984 Oct, 1985 January-1986 June
Undated		
b. 2, f. 39	B-S	
b. 2, f. 40-41	Van Druten, John	
b. 2, f. 42	Van Druten, John - Weiss, Mark B.	
b. 2, f. 43	Unidentified	

**Series II: SUBJECT FILES, 1930-1987***0.5 linear feet (1 box)*

This series contains material arranged alphabetically by subject.

b. 3, f. 44	American National Theatre and Academy	1969
b. 3, f. 45	Century Club	1970-1986
b. 3, f. 46	C.I.R.C.L.E.	[1981]
b. 3, f. 47	de Liagre, Alfred	1930, 1934, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1984-1987, undated
b. 3, f. 48	Financial documents	1947, 1974, 1982, 1983, 1986, undated
b. 3, f. 49	Individuals F-T	1956, 1983, undated
b. 3, f. 50	Memorabilia	undated
b. 3, f. 51	Notes	1982, 1984, undated
b. 3, f. 52	Plumstead Playhouse	1982
b. 3, f. 53	Speeches	1950, 1972, 1977, undated
	Theatrical productions	
b. 3, f. 54	Legal and financial documents	1949, 1950, undated
	Printed material	
b. 3, f. 55	B-T	1941, 1947, 1950, 1953, 1965, 1981, undated
	<i>J.B.</i>	
	Programs	
b. 3, f. 56-63	1958, 1959, 1960 October-Dec, 1961 February-Apr, undated	1958, 1959, 1960 October-Dec, 1961 February- Apr, undated
	Press clippings	

## Theatrical productions &gt; Printed material &gt; J.B. &gt; Press clippings (continued)

b. 3, f. 64-68	1958, 1959, 1960 January–Mar, Jun, October–Dec, 1961, 1970, undated	1958, 1959, 1960 January–Mar, Jun, October–Dec, 1961, 1970, undated
b. 3, f. 69	<i>Kwamina</i> English	1961 March–August
b. 3, f. 70	<i>Kwamina</i> English	1961 September–November
b. 3, f. 71	<i>The Madwoman of Chaillot</i>	1951
b. 3, f. 72	<i>On Your Toes</i> English	1983
b. 3, f. 73	Yale University	[1950], 1970, 1985–1987



**Series III: PHOTOGRAPHS, 1927-1977***.25' (2 boxes)*

This series contains material arranged alphabetically by subject.

b. 4, f. 74	de Liagre, Alfred	1934, [1943], 1969, 1970, 1977, [1986], undated
Theatrical productions		
b. 4, f. 75	B-V	1932, 1934, 1939, 1945, undated
b. 4, f. 76	<i>The Madwoman of Chaillot</i>	[1949]
b. 4, f. 77	<i>Second Threshold</i>	[1951]
b. 4, f. 78	<i>The Tumbler</i>	[1960]
b. 4, f. 79	<i>Yes, My Darling Daughter</i>	1939
b. 4, f. 80	Unidentified	undated
Oversized photographs		
Actors		
b. 5, f. 81	P-S	
b. 5, f. 82	Katherine Cornell and Tyrone Power in <i>The Dark is Light Enough</i>	
b. 5, f. 83	Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne (various productions)	1927, 1928, 1939, undated
b. 5, f. 84	Unidentified	undated

**Accession 2010-M-082: Additional material, 1933-1978**

## Photographs

b. 1, f. 1	<i>Bubbling Brown Sugar</i> , Theatre de Paris	1978 September 24
b. 1, f. 1	<i>By Your Leave</i> , Morosco Theatre	1934 January 24
b. 1, f. 1	<i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> , ANTA Theater	1974 September 24
b. 1, f. 1	<i>Deathtrap</i> , Music Box Theatre	1978 February 26
b. 1, f. 1	<i>The Deep Blue Sea</i> , Morosco Theater	1952 November 5
b. 1, f. 2	<i>The Druid Circle</i> , Morosco Theatre	1947 October 22
b. 1, f. 2	<i>Escapade</i> , 48th Street Theatre	1953 November 12
b. 1, f. 2	<i>Fresh Fields</i> , Empire Theatre	1936 February 10
b. 1, f. 2	<i>The Girls in 509</i> , Belasco Theatre	1958 October 15
b. 1, f. 2	<i>The Golden Apple</i> , Alvin Theatre	1954 April 20
b. 1, f. 3	<i>The Irregular Verb To Love</i> , Ethel Barrymore Theatre	1963 September 18
b. 1, f. 3	<i>J.B.</i> , ANTA Theatre	1958 December 11
b. 1, f. 3	<i>Janus</i> , Plymouth Theatre	1955 November 24
b. 1, f. 3	<i>Kwamina</i> , 54th Street Theatre	1961 October 23
b. 1, f. 3	<i>Love in E-Flat</i> , Brooks Atkinson Theatre	1967 February 13
b. 1, f. 4	<i>The Madwoman of Chaillot</i> , Belasco Theatre	1948 December 27
b. 1, f. 4	<i>The Mermaids Singing</i> , Empire Theatre	1945 November 28
b. 1, f. 4	<i>Mr. and Mrs. North</i> , Belasco Theatre	1941 January 12
b. 1, f. 4	<i>Nature's Way</i> , Coronet Theatre	1957 October 16
b. 1, f. 4	<i>No Code to Guide Her</i> , Playhouse Theatre	1939
b. 1, f. 5	<i>Our Town</i> , ANTA Theater	1969 November 27
b. 1, f. 5	<i>Petticoat Fever</i> , Ritz Theatre	1935 March 4
b. 1, f. 5	<i>Photo Finish</i> , Brooks Atkinson Theatre	1963 February 12

## Photographs (continued)

b. 1, f. 5	<i>The Pure in Heart</i> , Longacre Theatre Actual performance photographs taken by Lester-Pickett.	1934 March 20
b. 1, f. 5	<i>Second Threshold</i> , Morosco Theatre	1951 January 2
b. 1, f. 6	<i>Three-Cornered Moon</i> , Cort Theatre	1933 March 16
b. 1, f. 6	<i>The Tumbler</i> , Helen Hayes Theatre	1960 February 24
b. 1, f. 6	<i>The Voice of the Turtle</i> , Morosco Theatre	1943 December 8
b. 1, f. 6	<i>The Walrus and the Carpenter</i> , Cort Theatre	1941 November 8
b. 1, f. 6	<i>Yes, My Darling Daughter</i> , The Playhouse	1937 February 9

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## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Theatrical producers and directors -- New York  
(State) -- New York

### **Genres / Formats**

Photoprints

### **Names**

Brook, Clive, 1887-1974  
De Liagre, Alfred, 1904-1987  
Huxley, Aldous, 1894-1963  
MacLeish, Archibald, 1892-1982  
Rice, Elmer, 1892-1967  
Van Druten, John, 1901-1957  
Wendel, Beth

### **Corporate Bodies**

ANTA (Organization)  
Century Association (New York, N.Y.)