

Goodman Ace Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the
Library of Congress

Prepared by Laura J. Kells



Manuscript Division, Library of
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2001

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Collection Summary

Title: Goodman Ace Papers

Span Dates: 1931-1972

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1931-1967)

ID No.: MSS10132

Creator: Ace, Goodman, 1899-1982

Extent: 110 items; 58 containers; 23.2 linear feet; 1 microfilm reel

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Author and radio personality. Bound volumes containing approximately two thousand scripts and correspondence relating to radio and television programs for which Goodman Ace was a writer. Most of the radio scripts are for "Easy Aces," a program which Ace wrote, produced, directed, and performed in, and which also featured his wife, Jane Ace.

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.

People

Ace, Goodman.

Ace, Jane, 1900-1974.

Subjects

Radio scripts.

Television scripts.

Television specials.

Titles

Danny Kaye show (Radio program)

Easy Aces (Radio program)

Milton Berle show (Television program)

Perry Como Show (Television program)

Occupations

Authors.

Radio personalities.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Goodman Ace, author and radio personality, were deposited in the Library of Congress by Ace in 1973. A small addition was given by Arthur J. Lieb in 1989.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Goodman Ace is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on one reel. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Goodman Ace Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Event</i> |
|---------------|--|
| 1899, Jan. 15 | Born Goodman Aiskowitz, Kansas City, Mo. |
| 1919 | Drama and film critic, <i>Kansas City Post</i> , Kansas City, Mo. |
| 1928 | Broadcast his newspaper column on radio station KMBC, Kansas City, Mo. Married Jane Sherwood (died 1974) |
| 1928-1945 | Wrote, produced, directed, and acted with wife, Jane Ace, in "Easy Aces," radio program |
| 1945-1946 | Head writer, "The Danny Kaye Show," radio program |
| 1946 | Supervisor of comedy, Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) |
| 1947 | Established School of Comedy Writers, Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) |
| 1948-1949 | Wrote, produced, directed, and acted with wife, Jane Ace, in "Mr. Ace and Jane," radio program |
| 1949-1950 | Wrote and acted with wife, Jane Ace, in television version of "Easy Aces" |
| 1950-1952 | Writer, "The Big Show," radio program hosted by Tallulah Bankhead |
| 1952-1955 | Head writer, "The Milton Berle Show," television program |
| 1955-1959 | Head writer, "The Perry Como Show," television program |
| 1955 | Published <i>The Book of Little Knowledge: More Than You Want to Know about Television</i> (N.Y.: Simon & Schuster. 183 pp.) |
| 1957 | Wrote screenplay for <i>I Married a Woman</i> |
| 1960-1967 | Writer, "Perry Como's Kraft Music Hall" television specials |
| 1963-1964 | Writer, "The Sid Caesar Show," television program |
| 1966 | Published <i>The Fine Art of Hypochondria; or, How Are You?</i> (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday. 188 pp.) |
| 1960s-1970s | Wrote "Top Of My Head," column in <i>Saturday Review</i> |
| 1970 | Published <i>Ladies and Gentlemen, Easy Aces</i> (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday. 210 pp.) |

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|---------------|--|
| 1971 | Published <i>The Better of Goodman Ace</i> (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday. 230 pp.) |
| ca. 1972 | Began periodic appearances on “All Things Considered,” radio program |
| 1982, Mar. 25 | Died, New York, N.Y. |

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Goodman Ace (1899-1982) span the years 1931-1972, with the bulk of the material dating from 1931 to 1967. They consist primarily of bound volumes containing approximately two thousand scripts for radio and television programs. Goodman Ace was a comic writer who wrote for radio in the 1930s and 1940s and for television in the 1950s and 1960s. Ace and his wife Jane starred in a long-running network radio program, “Easy Aces,” which Goodman Ace wrote, produced, and directed. He later wrote for radio and television programs featuring such performers as Tallulah Bankhead, Milton Berle, Perry Como, and Danny Kaye. At one point, Ace was the highest paid writer in television. The Goodman Ace Papers contain scripts for most of the programs for which he wrote. Some scripts contain hand-written annotations. The papers are organized in three series: [Radio Scripts](#), [Television Scripts](#), and [Miscellany](#).

The [Radio Scripts](#) series consists primarily of those for “Easy Aces.” The program, a situation comedy featuring Goodman and Jane Ace as a married couple, was noted for its verbal humor, including malapropisms spoken by Jane. The earliest scripts, from 1931 until early 1933, are for network shows produced in Chicago. Later shows were produced in New York. Episode dates are missing from most scripts from October 1931 through January 1936. This series also contains a volume of scripts from “The Danny Kaye Show.”

The [Television Scripts](#) series focuses on Ace's work as head writer for television programs featuring Milton Berle and Perry Como. “The Milton Berle Show” was one of the most popular television programs in the early years of television. Scripts for this series, a mixture of comedy and variety featuring the man known as “Mr. Television,” cover the years 1952 to 1955 and are compiled in bound volumes. During this period the program changed sponsorship. It was first called “Texaco Star Theater” and later changed to the “Buick-Berle Show.” In late 1955, Goodman Ace became head writer for “The Perry Como Show,” a weekly musical variety series. In the 1960s, the program was renamed “Perry Como's Kraft Music Hall” and changed from a weekly series to television specials. Scripts from 1961 to 1963 are compiled in bound volumes. Scripts from 1964 to 1967 are unbound.

The [Miscellany](#) includes three letters from Ace regarding a lecture he was to give in 1972.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in three series:

- [Radio Scripts, 1931-1946](#)
- [Television Scripts, 1952-1967](#)
- [Miscellany, 1965-1972](#)

Description of Series

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Series</i> |
|------------------|--|
| BOX 1-29 | <u>Radio Scripts, 1931-1946</u> Bound volumes. Arranged alphabetically by title of program and therein chronologically. The first volume of "Easy Aces" scripts is available on microfilm. Shelf no. 20,020 |
| BOX 30-58 | <u>Television Scripts, 1952-1967</u> Bound volumes and a few unbound scripts. Arranged alphabetically by title of program and therein chronologically. |
| BOX 58 | <u>Miscellany, 1965-1972</u> Correspondence. Arranged chronologically. |

Container List

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Contents</i> |
|------------------|---|
| BOX 1-29 | Radio Scripts, 1931-1946 Bound volumes. Arranged alphabetically by title of program and therein chronologically. The first volume of "Easy Aces" scripts is available on microfilm. Shelf no. 20,020 |
| BOX 1 | "The Danny Kaye Show," 1945, Sept. 28-1946, Mar. 8 |
| BOX 2 | "Easy Aces" 1931-1932 Nos. 1-40 Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 20,020 |
| BOX 3 | Nos. 41-75 |
| BOX 4 | Nos. 76-116 |
| BOX 5 | 1932-1933 Nos. 1-104 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 6 | 1933-1934 Nos. 1-72 |
| BOX 7 | Nos. 73-144 |
| BOX 8 | 1934-1935 Nos. 145-194 |
| BOX 9 | Nos. 1-51 |
| BOX 10 | 1935, nos. 52-102 |
| BOX 11 | 1936, Jan., nos. 103-155 |
| BOX 12 | 1936, Feb. 4-Apr. 30, nos. 156-194 |
| BOX 13 | 1936, May 5-Oct. 29, nos. 195-272 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 14 | 1936, Nov. 1-1937, Apr. 29, nos. 273-350 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 15 | "Easy Aces" 1937, May 4-Oct. 28, nos. 351-428 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 16 | 1937, Nov. 2-1938, Apr. 28, nos. 429-506 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 17 | 1938, May 3-Oct. 27, nos. 507-584 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 18 | 1938, Nov. 1-1939, Apr. 27, nos. 585-662 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 19 | 1939, May 2-Oct. 26, nos. 663-740 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 20 | 1939, Oct. 31-1940, Apr. 25, nos. 741-818 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 21 | 1940, Apr. 30-Oct. 24, nos. 819-896 (2 vols.) |

Radio Scripts, 1931-1946

Container

Contents

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|-----------|---|
| BOX 22 | 1940, Oct.29-1941, Apr. 24, nos. 897-974 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 23 | 1941, Apr. 29-Oct. 23, nos. 975-1052 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 24 | 1941, Oct. 28-1942, Apr. 23, nos. 1053-1130 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 25 | 1942, Apr. 28-Oct. 22, nos. 1131-1208 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 26 | 1942, Oct. 28-1943, Apr. 23, nos. 1209-1286 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 27 | 1943, Apr. 28-Nov. 26, nos. 1287-1379 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 28 | 1943, Dec. 8-1944, July 19, nos. 1-32 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 29 | 1944, July 26-1945, Jan. 17, nos. 33-58 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 30-58 | Television Scripts, 1952-1967 Bound volumes and a few unbound scripts. Arranged alphabetically by title of program and therein chronologically. |
| BOX 30 | “The Milton Berle Show” 1952, Nov. 11-1953, Feb. 17, nos. 7-18 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 31 | 1953, Mar. 3-June 9, nos. 19-30 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 32 | 1953, Sept. 29-1954, Jan. 19, nos. 31-42 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 33 | 1954, Feb. 2-May 25, nos. 43-55 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 34 | 1954, Sept. 21-1955, Mar. 8, nos. 56-68 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 35 | “The Perry Como Show” 1955, Sept. 17-Dec. 10, nos. 1-13 |
| BOX 36 | 1955, Dec. 17-1956, Mar. 10, nos. 14-26 |
| BOX 37 | 1956, Mar. 17-June 9, nos. 27-39 |
| BOX 38 | 1956, Sept. 15-Dec. 8, nos. 40-52 |
| BOX 39 | 1956, Dec. 15-1957, Mar. 9, nos. 53-65 |
| BOX 40 | 1957, Mar. 16-June 8, nos. 66-78 |
| BOX 41 | 1957, Sept. 14-Dec. 7, nos. 79-90 |
| BOX 42 | 1957, Dec. 14-1958, Mar. 8, nos. 91-103 |
| BOX 43 | 1958, Mar. 15-June 7, nos. 104-116 |
| BOX 44 | 1958, Sept. 13-Dec. 6, nos. 117-129 |
| BOX 45 | 1958, Dec. 13-1959, Mar. 7, nos. 130-142 |
| BOX 46 | 1959, Mar. 14-June 6, nos. 143-155, includes “Pontiac Presents Perry,” Mar. 24 |
| BOX 47 | “Perry Como's Kraft Music Hall” 1960, Oct. 5-Nov. 30, nos. 189-196 |

Television Scripts, 1952-1967

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Contents</i> |
|------------------|--|
| BOX 48 | 1960, Dec. 7-1961, Feb. 1, nos. 195 [misnumbered]-204 |
| BOX 49 | 1961, Feb. 8-Mar. 29, nos. 205-212 |
| BOX 50 | 1961, Apr. 5-June 7, nos. 213-221 |
| BOX 51 | 1961, Oct. 4-Nov. 15, nos. 222-228 |
| BOX 52 | 1961, Nov. 22-1962, Jan. 10, nos. 229-234, includes "The Jimmy Durante Show," Dec. 13 |
| BOX 53 | 1962, Jan. 17-Mar. 7, nos. 235-239, includes "The Rex Allen Show," Feb. 28 |
| BOX 54 | 1962, Mar. 14-June 6, nos. 240-250, includes "The American Landscape," Apr. 11 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 55 | 1962, Oct. 3-1963, Jan. 9, nos. 251-264 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 56 | 1963, Jan. 23-Apr. 24, nos. [265]-277 (2 vols.) |
| BOX 57 | 1963, May 1-June 12, nos. 278-283 1964, Oct. 29-1965, May 27, nos. 291-297 (7 folders) |
| BOX 58 | 1965, Oct. 18-1967, May 22, nos. 298-311 (11 folders) |
| BOX 58 | Miscellany, 1965-1972 Correspondence. Arranged chronologically. |
| BOX 58 | Correspondence, 1965, 1972 |