



# Guide to the Ann Preston Bridgers Papers, 1871-1967 and undated

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This collection guide was produced in .

This PDF version was created on **April 2, 2026**.

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

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## Table of Contents

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<a href="#">Summary</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Background</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Administrative Information</a> .....	7
<a href="#">Names and Subjects</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Collection Inventory</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Correspondence Series, 1887-1967 and undated</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Writings Series</a> .....	9
<a href="#">Ann P. Bridgers Writings Subseries</a> .....	9
<a href="#">Writings of Others Subseries</a> .....	12
<a href="#">Raleigh Little Theater Series</a> .....	14
<a href="#">Legal and Financial Papers Series</a> .....	14
<a href="#">Clippings Series</a> .....	14
<a href="#">Miscellany Series, 1871-1961 and undated</a> .....	15
<a href="#">Photographs Series</a> .....	15

## Summary

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**Collection Title:**

Ann Preston Bridgers papers, 1871-1967 and undated

**Creator:**

Bridgers, Ann Preston

**Extent:**

8.8 Linear Feet  
3,100 Items

**Physical Location:**

For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

**Language:**

English

**Language:**

English.

**Collection ID:**

RL.00150

**Permalink:**

<http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/bridgers/>

**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], The Papers of Ann Preston Bridgers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Background

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**Scope and Content**

The papers of Ann Preston Bridgers span the years 1871-1967, although the bulk of the material covers the period 1925-1963. Included in the collection are correspondence, manuscript drafts and notes, business items and programs

related to the Raleigh Little Theatre, contracts, wills, newsclippings, and photographs.

Miss Bridgers' life is best documented in the correspondence. It is chiefly of a personal nature, between Miss Bridgers and her family, including her sisters Elizabeth (Bab) and Emily and to a lesser extent her brother Robert. Elizabeth was the wife of Jonathan Daniels, son of Josephus Daniels, and there are several letters from Jonathan to the Bridgers and references made to his parents. Later correspondence includes letters from Bab's daughter, Elizabeth and her husband Charles (Chick) B. Squire, in which they often critiqued each other's writings.

Elizabeth Lawrence, horticulturist and author of gardening works, is also represented extensively in the correspondence from the mid 1930's until about 1948. Other correspondents include George Abbott, whose correspondence dates primarily from 1962 to 1964, and various literary agents.

The Writings series comprises the bulk of the collection, and includes works by Miss Bridgers and other members of her family and friends. *Coquette*, the work for which she is best known is not represented in this series. There is, however, information regarding this play, which opened on Broadway in 1927, in the Correspondence, Legal and Financial Papers, Raleigh Little Theater, and Clippings series. Also included in this series are several drafts of "Those Without Freedom," an unpublished novel about the South after the Civil War.

The National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints lists two published works by Miss Bridgers: *Coquette*, where she is listed as the joint author, and an article in the *Saturday Review of Literature* in 1935 about Thomas Wolfe. Drafts and background material for this article are located in the Writings series. Other persons represented in the Writings series include: Emily and Robert R. Bridgers; Elizabeth (Daniels) Squire; and Elizabeth Lawrence.

The efforts of Miss Bridgers and others involved with the founding of the Raleigh Little Theater are reflected in the Correspondence and Raleigh Little Theater series.

In addition to legal papers relating to the play *Coquette*, the Legal and Financial Papers series also includes documents concerning the will and estate of Miss Bridgers' aunt, Emily Bridgers, receipts, and other miscellaneous financial data. Financial concerns of the family are also found in the Correspondence series.

The Clippings series contains reviews of the Broadway production of *Coquette*, as well as book reviews and newspaper columns by Miss Bridgers. The series also provides information about Miss Bridgers, other family members, and miscellany items.

Genealogical information about the Bridgers family, an engagement book Miss Bridgers kept while traveling in Europe (1961), and other items comprise the Miscellany series.

The Photographs series contains three albums of photographs. Some appear to be of theatrical productions; many are of unidentified persons. Loose photographs include those of Ann Preston Bridgers, George Abbott, Mr. and Mrs. Josephus Daniels, and Miss Bridgers' grandfather, Robert Rufus Bridgers.

## Biographical/Historical

### Chronology

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
1891, May 1	Born Raleigh, Wake County, North Carolina
ca. 1908	Attended Mary Baldwin Seminary, Staunton, Va.
1915	A.B., Smith College, Northampton, Mass.
1919	Member of the Smith College Unit of the YMCA that served overseas with the Rolling Canteen
1923-1930	Wrote weekly column, "Impressions Along Broadway" for the Raleigh News and Observer
ca. 1923	Served as understudy to Lynn Fontaine in the play "Dulcy" while it was on tour
1925	Wrote first draft of play "Coquette"
1926	Acted in play on Broadway called "Broadway"

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
1926	Enrolled in English class at Columbia University
1927	Collaborated with George Abbott to bring Coquette starring Helen Hayes to Broadway
1935-1936	Instrumental in founding the Raleigh Little Theater under the auspices of the Federal Theatre Project of the Work Projects Administration
1936	Her play "Quicksand" was presented by the Raleigh Little Theater
1936-1937	Wrote column "The Theatre" for the Raleigh Times
1937	Her play Coquette was performed by the Raleigh Little Theater
1938	Her play "Carrie Was a Lady" was performed by the Raleigh Little Theatre
1965-1966	Member of the Raleigh Little Theater Board of Directors
1967, May 3	Died

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## **Administrative Information**

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### **Publication Statement**

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### **Access Restrictions**

Collection is open for research.

Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection.

All or portions of this collection may be housed off-site in Duke University's Library Service Center. The library may require up to 48 hours to retrieve these materials for research use.

Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library to use this collection.

### **Use Restrictions**

The status of the copyright interests in the papers is unknown. For further information, see the section on copyright in the Regulations and Procedures of the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

### **Acquisition Information**

The papers of Ann Preston Bridgers (1891-1967) actress, playwright, and patron of the arts were acquired by the Rubenstein Library through purchase in 1974, and gift in 2012.

### **Processing Information**

Processed by: Janie C. Morris

Completed February 12, 1988

Collection updated to reflect accession 2012-0086 by Alice Poffinberger, February 2014

Encoded by Stephen Douglas Miller

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Names and Subjects

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- Theater -- North Carolina
- Authors, American
- Bridgers family
- Abbott, George, 1889-
- Bridgers, Ann Preston
- Bridgers, Ann Preston
- Daniels, Jonathan, 1902-1981
- Raleigh Little Theater (Raleigh, N.C.)
- Federal Theater Project (U.S.)
- Lawrence, Elizabeth, 1904-1985

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## Collection Inventory

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### Correspondence Series, 1887-1967 and undated

#### Scope and Contents note

Chiefly personal correspondence between Bridgers family members and friends. Includes letters from agents, who were attempting to get Miss Bridgers' plays produced and her writings published. Arranged chronologically.

1887-1929	Box 1
<b>Physical Description:</b> 7 folders	
1930-1939	Box 2
<b>Physical Description:</b> 8 folders	
1940-1945	Box 3
<b>Physical Description:</b> 6 folders	
1946-1957	Box 4
<b>Physical Description:</b> 8 folders	

1958-1966 and undated	Box 5
<b>Physical Description:</b> 8 folders	

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Writings Series

### Scope and Contents note

Divided into two subseries, those by Miss Bridgers and those by others. Those by Miss Bridgers are subarranged alphabetically by title, while those by others are subarranged alphabetically by author. Also includes miscellaneous notes, writings, and drafts of unidentified manuscripts.

### Ann P. Bridgers Writings Subseries

"Alice and the Duchess-Swing It" or "Pig and Peppers" Misc. Notes and Mss.	Box 6
"Carrie Was a Lady," Misc. Notes and Mss. of Version entitled "Once A Virgin"	Box 6
"Carrie Was a Lady" Mss. of Play, Version 1	Box 6
"Carrie Was a Lady" Mss. of Play, Version 2	Box 6
"Carrie Was a Lady" Mss. of Play, Version 3	Box 6
"David and King Saul" Misc. Notes and Mss. of Play	Box 6
<b>Physical Description:</b> 4 folders	
"David and King Saul" Mss. of Play	Box 6
"Henrietta" Opera, Mss. and Pages Which were cut	Box 7
"Henrietta" Opera, Mss.	Box 7
"Henrietta" Opera, Mss. First Copy	Box 7
"It's Not Always Easy" Play, Mss. of Version entitled "It Isn't Always Easy"	Box 7
"It's Not Always Easy" Mss. of Play	Box 7
"Lindsay Harper" Notes and Mss. of Play	Box 7

"Lindsay Harper" Mss. of Play	Box 7
"Mark of Murder" Misc. Notes and Mss.	Box 7
"Mrs. John Emerson" Version Entitled "Quicksand"	Box 7
"Mrs. John Emerson" Version Entitled "Mrs. John Latimer"	Box 7
"Mrs. John Emerson" Mss. of Play, Version 1	Box 8
"Mrs. John Emerson" Mss. of Play, Version 2	Box 8
"New York 1918" Mss. of Play, Version 1	Box 8
"New York 1918" Mss. of Play, Version 2	Box 8
"New York 1918" Mss. of Play, Version 3	Box 8
"November 8, 1942" Misc. Notes and Radio Script, 1943	Box 8
"A Play About America Today, the Particular Scene Being the South" Version Entitled "Break This Heavy Chain"	Box 8
"A Play About America Today, the Particular Scene Being the South" Mss. With Notes 1940	Box 8
"A Play About America Today, the Particular Scene Being the South" Mss. 1940	Box 8
"Possess These Shores" Mss. of Play, Version 1	Box 8
"Possess These Shores" Mss. of Play, Version 2	Box 8
"Possess These Shores" Mss. of Play, Version 3	Box 8
"The Same House"	Box 9
"Shanty Boat," "The Theatre" Background Material, Drawings and Notes	Box 9
"The Theatre" Incl. Dance "This Beautiful Structure" Version Entitled "Calhoun"	Box 9

"This Beautiful Structure" Long Version "This Beautiful Structure" Short Version <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 9
"This Beautiful Structure" Edited Version <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 9
"This Throne of Kings" Working Notes	Box 10
"This Throne of Kings" Misc. Notes and Mss. <b>Physical Description:</b> 5 folders	Box 10
"This Throne of Kings" Mss. of Play	Box 10
"Those Without Freedom" Misc. Notes and Mss., Version 1, <b>Physical Description:</b> 5 folders	Box 11
"Those Without Freedom" Misc. Notes and Mss., Version 2, <b>Physical Description:</b> 4 folders	Box 11
"Those Without Freedom" Misc. Notes and Mss., Version 2, <b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	Box 12
"Those Without Freedom" Version 1, Chapters 1-17 <b>Physical Description:</b> 5 folders	Box 12
"Those Without Freedom" Version 1, Edited Pages	Box 12
"Those Without Freedom" Version 2, Chapters 1-17 <b>Physical Description:</b> 5 folders	Box 13
"Those Without Freedom" Version 3, Chapters 1-17 <b>Physical Description:</b> 4 folders	Box 13
"Those Without Freedom" Notes	Box 13
"Those Without Freedom" Mss. of Play	Box 13

"Those Without Freedom" Omitted Last Chapters	Box 13
"Tine" Mss. of Play, Edited Version 1 <b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	Box 14
"Tine" Mss. of Play, Edited Version 2	Box 14
"Tine" Mss. of Play	Box 14
"When I Love Thee Not" Mss. and Notes, Version 1	Box 14
"When I Love Thee Not" Mss., Version 2	Box 14
"When I Love Thee Not" Mss. and Notes, Version 3	Box 14
"Who Help Themselves" Mss. Fragment	Box 14
"Who Treads the Boards"	Box 14
Wolfe, Thomas - Background Material for Published Magazine Article "Thomas Wolfe" and the Article	Box 15
Misc. Mss. <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 15
Misc. Notes and Mss. <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 15
Unidentified <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 15
<b>Writings of Others Subseries</b>	
Bridgers, Emily N.	Box 16
Misc.	Box 16
Bridgers, Robert R. "Driftwood"	Box 16
"Easter"	Box 16

"The Golden Rods" Misc. Notes and Mss. Version 1	Box 16
"The Golden Rods" Mss. Version 2	Box 16
"Ogeechee Swamp" Notes and Mss. Version 1 <b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	Box 16
"Ogeechee Swamp" Mss. Version 2 <b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	Box 17
"Ogeechee Swamp" Mss. of Play by Katherine Simons from the Story by Robert R. Bridgers	Box 17
"Old Man Gooch" Misc. Notes and Mss.	Box 17
"Yellow Gal" Mss.	Box 17
Untitled Mss., 1938	Box 17
Lawrence, Elizabeth L. Articles on Gardening	Box 17
Misc.	Box 17
Squire, Elizabeth B. Daniels "Carolina--Two Families" The Feud; The Castle	Box 17
"Rhoda"	Box 17
"A Touch of Meanness" Misc. Notes and Mss.	Box 18
"A Touch of Meanness" Mss.	Box 18
Mss. Title Unidentified <b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	Box 18
Unidentified Notes and Mss. <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 18
Unidentified Notes and Mss. <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 19
Misc. Notes and Mss. <b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	Box 19

Willis, Winifred "Byron"	Box 19
Unidentified Authors	Box 19

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Raleigh Little Theater Series

#### Scope and Contents note

Divided into three subseries: General, 1936-1966; Programs, 1936-1966; and Clippings, 1936-1965. Includes information about different artists, plays, and people responsible for its theatrical productions, board minutes, a list of its patrons, a draft of its history, and other miscellany items. Arranged chronologically within each subseries.

General, 1936-1966 and undated <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 20
Programs, 1936-1966 <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 20
Clippings, 1936-1965 and undated	Box 20

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Legal and Financial Papers Series

#### Scope and Contents note

Divided into three subseries: Coquette, 1926-1933; Emily Bridgers Estate, 1924-1944; and Miscellany, 1913-1959, and undated. Includes legal matters relating to the play Coquette; the will and estate of Miss Bridgers' aunt, Emily Bridgers; receipts and furniture inventories; and other miscellaneous items. Arranged chronologically within each subseries.

Coquette, 1926-1933	Box 20
Emily Bridgers Estate, 1924-1944	Box 20
Miscellany, 1913-1959 and undated Clippings	Box 20

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Clippings Series

### Scope and Contents note

Divided into five subseries: Book reviews; Coquette; "Impressions Along Broadway;" "The Theatre;" and Miscellany. The book reviews and columns "Impressions Along Broadway" and "The Theatre" were written by Miss Bridgers. The Coquette clippings include reviews of the Broadway production of the play (1927) from various newspapers and of its star Helen Hayes. Includes miscellaneous clippings relating to Miss Bridgers, her family, and other topics. Arranged chronologically within each subseries.

Book Reviews, 1925-1937	Box 20
Coquette, 1927-1965 and undated	Box 20
<b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	
"Impressions Along Broadway," 1923-1930 and undated	Box 21
<b>Physical Description:</b> 4 folders	
"The Theatre," 1936-1937 and undated	Box 21
Miscellany, 1925-1966 and undated	Box 21

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Miscellany Series, 1871-1961 and undated

#### Scope and Contents note

Includes Miss Bridgers' passport, engagement book, genealogical information about the Bridgers family, and other miscellaneous items. Arranged chronologically.

Miscellany	Box 21
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[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Photographs Series

#### Scope and Contents note

Includes three photograph albums and a few loose photographs primarily of the Bridgers family.

Albums	Box 21
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Albums

Box 22

**Physical Description:** 2 folders

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Miscellany

Box 22

[Return to Table of Contents](#)