

Howard E. Reinheimer Papers



**Music Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2022**

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Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Rachel McNellis, September 2022

Collection Summary

Title: Howard E. Reinheimer Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1924-1973

Bulk Dates: 1940-1960

Call No.: ML31.R44

Creator: Reinheimer, Howard E., 1899-1970

Extent: approximately 2,800 items

Extent: 8 containers

Extent: 4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English, French, Italian, German, and Spanish

Location: Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016570630>

Summary: Howard Reinheimer (1899–1970) was a lawyer specializing in copyright law who represented prominent playwrights, composers, directors, and producers. These papers consist of Reinheimer’s business files, which focus on legal issues related to theatrical works that his clients wrote or produced. A substantial amount of correspondence documents his associations with Moss Hart, George Kaufman, Alan J. Lerner, Frederick Loewe, and others whom he represented. Additional materials include contracts and rights agreements, as well as a small number of scripts, financial statements, and clippings. This collection is the small percentage known to exist of what we know was once an extensive archive.

Acquisition Information

Gift, Peter Reinheimer, 2020

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

Rachel McNellis processed the Howard E. Reinheimer Papers in 2022. McNellis coded the finding aid and Mark Horowitz wrote the biographical note in 2022.

Transfers

Sound and video recordings from the Howard E. Reinheimer Papers have been transferred to the Library of Congress Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division where they are identified as part of the Howard E. Reinheimer Collection (MAVIS no. 17702). An inventory of this material is available in the Music Division's collection file.

Related Material

The Music Division houses numerous collections related to Howard Reinheimer's clients, including the [Alan Jay Lerner Papers](#), [American / Century Play Company Scripts and Business Papers](#), [George S. Kaufman Papers](#), [George S. Kaufman and Anne Kaufman Schneider Papers](#), [Gilbert Miller Papers](#), [Irving Berlin Collection](#), [Oscar Hammerstein II Collection](#), and the [Robert E. Sherwood Play Scripts](#).

Copyright Status

Materials from the Howard E. Reinheimer Papers are governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.) and other applicable international copyright laws.

Access and Restrictions

The Howard E. Reinheimer Papers are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Music Division prior to visiting in order to determine whether the desired materials will be available at that time.

Certain restrictions on using or copying materials may apply.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, container number], Howard E. Reinheimer Papers, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Howard E. Reinheimer was born to Emanuel and Esther Bamberger Reinheimer on May 3, 1899. He received his bachelor's degree in 1917, and in 1919 he received an undergraduate law degree and a master's degree from Columbia University, where he had also been the editor of the Columbia Law Review.

During World War I, Reinheimer served in the U.S. Navy. In the early years of his civilian career, he seems to have focused primarily on real estate and real estate law. In 1927, he formed the 7 West Forty-fourth Street Corporation, and in May 1928 he incorporated Greenpoint Foundation, Realty.

Reinheimer married Eleanor Kaiser in 1929, and in July 1931 their son Howard Reinheimer Jr. was born. Their son Kurt E. Reinheimer was born in May 1935, but died in July 1954.

Reinheimer's career shifted almost entirely to show business, likely the result of his friendship with lyricist, librettist, and producer Oscar Hammerstein II. According to Reinheimer's son, his father waited to marry until after he successfully sold the film rights to the Hammerstein and Kern musical *Show Boat*, which was first produced as a mostly silent picture in 1929.

In 1934, Reinheimer appeared as amicus curiae on behalf of Jerome Kern, Robert Sherwood, Maxwell Anderson, Hammerstein, Sigmund Romberg, Laurence Schwab, Fanny Heaslip Lea, and Arthur Schwartz. He then settled a case representing George S. Kaufman and Robert Sherwood against Hollywood mogul Samuel Goldwyn. In 1936, Reinheimer represented playwright Elmer Rice in a case before the New York Supreme Court regarding the retroactive taxation of copyrights and patents. Later that same year, he represented Romberg in contract negotiations with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and he represented Simon & Schuster publishers in a plagiarism lawsuit. In 1937, he acquired the rights to 111 plays that had been the property of Charles B. Dillingham on behalf of Irving Berlin, Hammerstein, Otto Harbach, and Kern. Then in October he famously acquired the rights to seventy-two musical productions from the estate of Florenz Ziegfeld on behalf of Berlin, Harbach, Hammerstein, Kern, and Romberg.

During World War II, Reinheimer headed the copyright division in the Office of Alien Property Custodian and in that capacity had to defend Hitler's copyright to *Mein Kampf*. In 1943, he was named the civilian legal adviser representing the film rights to *Winged Victory*.

Reinheimer's friendship with Hammerstein and his contributions to the lyricist's business activities evolved during the 1940s. In fact, they were purported to be together on a train in 1940 when Hammerstein was inspired to write the lyric for "The Last Time I Saw Paris." Reinheimer began representing the new team of composer Richard Rodgers and Hammerstein, whose prominence exploded with the success of the Broadway musical *Oklahoma!* in 1943, and who then produced the play *I Remember Mama* in 1944. After reading the reviews for their next musical *Carousel* in 1945, Reinheimer famously wired Rodgers and Hammerstein "Thanks a lot," signing it "Henry Morgenthau," the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. Reinheimer swiftly became something of a third partner to Rodgers and Hammerstein, functioning both as a legal and financial advisor, and with and for them creating several subsidiaries and corporations to represent their various interests. In 1947, he negotiated the sale of the Rodgers and Hammerstein-produced Irving Berlin musical *Annie Get Your Gun* to MGM for the then-record price for a stage work of \$650,000. With the extraordinary success of *South Pacific* in 1949, including commercial tie-ins, their business dealings continued to expand in multiple directions.

In 1945, Reinheimer became a member of the advisory board of Theater Incorporated, the newly organized non-profit repertory theater. He formed a theatrical production company in 1946 on behalf of Otto Preminger, and in 1947, he negotiated the musical rights to the play *Charley's Aunt* on behalf of producers Cy Feuer and Ernest Martin. Reinheimer was made legal advisor in 1949 to the newly-formed Committee of Theatrical Producers.

Others among Reinheimer's list of clients were Ina Claire, Marc Connelly, Dorothy Fields, Moss Hart, Sidney Kingsley, Alan Jay Lerner, Beatrice Lillie, Lindsay & Crouse, Carole Lombard, Mary Martin, Gilbert Miller, Margaret Mitchell, Jule Styne, and Kurt Weill.

After a brief illness, Reinheimer passed away at Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan on August 7, 1970.

Scope and Content Note

The Howard E. Reinheimer Papers consist of [Business Papers](#) spanning from 1924 to 1973, with the majority dating from 1940 to 1960. The correspondence, contracts, agreements, financial statements, and clippings address the legal aspects of theatrical works that his clients wrote or produced. The series contains a substantial amount of material related to George Kaufman and Moss Hart's *George Washington Slept Here*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, and *You Can't Take It with You*, as well as Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's *My Fair Lady*. Reinheimer's interactions with playwrights and producers Marc Connelly, Cy Feuer, Carol Irwin, Frederick Lonsdale, Leueen MacGrath, Otto Preminger, Sigmund Romberg, and Sandy Wilson are also well documented.

Organization of the Howard E. Reinheimer Papers

The collection is arranged in one series:

- [Business Papers, 1924-1973](#)

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Anderson, Maxwell, 1888-1959.
Berlin, Irving, 1888-1989.
Claire, Ina, 1893-1985.
Connelly, Marc, 1890-1980.
Feuer, Cy.
Hammerstein, Oscar, II, 1895-1960.
Hart, Moss, 1904-1961.
Kaufman, George S. (George Simon), 1889-1961.
Kaufman, George S. (George Simon), 1889-1961. Man who came to dinner.
Kern, Jerome, 1885-1945.
Kingsley, Sidney, 1906-1995.
Lerner, Alan Jay, 1918-1986.
Lillie, Beatrice, 1894-1989.
Loewe, Frederick, 1901-1988.
Loewe, Frederick, 1901-1988. My fair lady.
Lombard, Carole, 1908-1942.
Lonsdale, Frederick, 1881-1954.
MacGrath, Leueen.
Martin, Ernest H., 1919-1995.
Miller, Gilbert.
Reinheimer, Howard E., 1899-1970--Archives.

Reinheimer, Howard E., 1899-1970--Correspondence.
Reinheimer, Howard E., 1899-1970.
Rodgers, Richard, 1902-1979.
Romberg, Sigmund, 1887-1951.
Schwartz, Arthur, 1900-1984.
Sherwood, Robert E. (Robert Emmet), 1896-1955.

Organizations

Warner Bros. Pictures (1923-1967)

Subjects

Copyright.
Dramatists--Correspondence.
Lawyers--United States--Correspondence.
Motion picture music--United States--History and criticism.
Music theater--United States--History and criticism.
Theater--United States--History.

Form/Genre

Business correspondence.
Clippings (Information artifacts)
Contracts.
Financial records.
Legal instruments.

Description of Series

Container
BOX 1-8

Series
Business Papers, 1924-1973

Howard Reinheimer's business papers consist chiefly of his correspondence with playwrights, composers, and producers whom he represented, as well as rights holders and production studios. The series also contains employment and production contracts, rights agreements, partnership agreements, and a small number of scripts, financial statements, and clippings. These materials focus primarily on licensing for film, television, and radio adaptations of plays and musicals, in addition to foreign language and international production rights. George Kaufman and Moss Hart's *The Man Who Came to Dinner* and *You Can't Take It with You* are heavily documented, as is Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's *My Fair Lady*. The papers also offer insight into the relationship between Kaufman and Hart's *George Washington Slept Here* and the corresponding British production *Queen Elizabeth Slept Here* that was based on it. Other files address the legal aspects of works that Marc Connelly, Cy Feuer, Bernard Hart, Joseph Hyman, Carol Irwin, Burton Lane, Frederick Lonsdale, Ernest Martin, Leueen MacGrath, Otto Preminger, Sigmund Romberg, and Sandy Wilson wrote or originally produced.

Arranged alphabetically, either by project title or last name, according to how Reinheimer labeled the files.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-8	<p>Business Papers, 1924-1973</p> <p>Howard Reinheimer's business papers consist chiefly of his correspondence with playwrights, composers, and producers whom he represented, as well as rights holders and production studios. The series also contains employment and production contracts, rights agreements, partnership agreements, and a small number of scripts, financial statements, and clippings. These materials focus primarily on licensing for film, television, and radio adaptations of plays and musicals, in addition to foreign language and international production rights. George Kaufman and Moss Hart's <i>The Man Who Came to Dinner</i> and <i>You Can't Take It with You</i> are heavily documented, as is Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's <i>My Fair Lady</i>. The papers also offer insight into the relationship between Kaufman and Hart's <i>George Washington Slept Here</i> and the corresponding British production <i>Queen Elizabeth Slept Here</i> that was based on it. Other files address the legal aspects of works that Marc Connelly, Cy Feuer, Bernard Hart, Joseph Hyman, Carol Irwin, Burton Lane, Frederick Lonsdale, Ernest Martin, Leueen MacGrath, Otto Preminger, Sigmund Romberg, and Sandy Wilson wrote or originally produced.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically, either by project title or last name, according to how Reinheimer labeled the files.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/1-2	<p><i>And Baby Makes Two</i>, 1956-1959 and undated</p> <p>Correspondence; photographic negative of promotional poster; script; notes</p> <p><i>Animal Crackers</i></p> <p>see <i>June Moon</i></p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	<p><i>Another Love Story</i>, 1943-1944</p> <p>Correspondence; contracts</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	<p><i>Baby and Me</i>, 1953</p> <p>Correspondence; contracts</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	<p><i>Beggar on Horseback</i>, 1959</p> <p>Correspondence; copyright agreement</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	<p><i>Bless You All</i>, 1950</p> <p>Correspondence; contracts</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	<p><i>The Boy Friend</i>, 1954, 1962</p> <p>Correspondence; contract</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	<p><i>The Brass Ring</i>, 1951</p> <p>Contract</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	<p>Burrows, Abe, 1951-1954</p> <p>Correspondence; lease</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	<p><i>Charley's Aunt</i>, 1940-1948</p> <p>Correspondence; contract</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	<p><i>Corner Druggist</i>, 1953</p> <p>Correspondence; contract</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/12 to 2/2	<p><i>Dear Ruth</i>, 1944-1946</p> <p>Correspondence; contracts; financial documents; clippings</p>
BOX-FOLDER 2/3	<p><i>Dinner at Eight</i>, 1932, 1950, 1960</p> <p>see also <i>Queen Elizabeth Slept Here</i></p> <p>Correspondence; contracts; copyright agreement</p>

Business Papers, 1924-1973

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 2/4	Ebsen Jr., Christian, 1943 Power of attorney
BOX-FOLDER 2/5-6	<i>Fancy Meeting You Again</i> , 1951 Correspondence; contracts
BOX-FOLDER 2/7	<i>First Lady</i> , 1950-1953 Correspondence
BOX-FOLDER 2/8	<i>Franklin Street</i> , 1942 Correspondence; contracts
BOX-FOLDER 2/9 to 3/2	<i>George Washington Slept Here</i> , 1940-1951 <i>see also Queen Elizabeth Slept Here</i> Correspondence; contracts; financial documents; program; clippings <i>Note:</i> Productions in Italy and England are heavily represented
BOX-FOLDER 3/3	Hammerstein II, Oscar, 1935 Photocopy of autograph letter
BOX-FOLDER 3/4	Hart, Bernard, 1950 Contract <i>Note:</i> Regarding <i>A Topical Revue of the Next 50 Years</i>
BOX-FOLDER 3/5	<i>Heidelberg</i> , 1924 Contract
BOX-FOLDER 3/6	<i>It Gives Me Great Pleasure</i> , 1954-1956 Correspondence; contracts
BOX-FOLDER 3/7-9	<i>June Moon</i> , 1930, 1948-1953 Correspondence; contracts <i>Includes:</i> Material related to <i>Animal Crackers</i>
BOX-FOLDER 3/10	<i>Lady Fair</i> , 1926 Contract
BOX-FOLDER 3/11	Lahm, David Eli, 1956-1960 Estate and insurance documents
BOX-FOLDER 3/12	<i>Leon Errol Production</i> , 1924-1925 Correspondence; contract
BOX-FOLDER 3/13 to 4/1	Levy, Ralph, 1947-1961 Correspondence; contracts <i>Note:</i> Contracts with MLA Artists, CBS Television, Metro-Goldwyn Meyer, and Prentice-Hall, Inc. <i>Includes:</i> Deed of Trust for Helen L. Levy
BOX-FOLDER 4/2	<i>L'il Abner</i> , 1934, 1948-1953 Correspondence; contracts
BOX-FOLDER 4/3	<i>Make Mine Music</i> , 1941 Correspondence; contract
BOX-FOLDER 4/4 to 5/8	<i>The Man Who Came to Dinner</i> , 1939-1941 Correspondence; contracts; notes <i>Note:</i> Material related primarily to the motion picture deal with Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc.
BOX-FOLDER 5/9 to 6/6	<i>The Man Who Came to Dinner</i> , 1942-1961 Correspondence; contracts; notes <i>Note:</i> Material related to international stage productions; television and radio productions
BOX-FOLDER 6/7	Miscellaneous, 1936-1943, 1968-1973, and undated Correspondence; contracts
BOX-FOLDER 6/8	<i>Mr. Big</i> , 1941 Correspondence; contracts

Business Papers, 1924-1973

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 6/9-14	<i>My Fair Lady</i> , 1951-1957 Correspondence; contracts; notes <i>Includes:</i> Material related to productions of the play <i>Pygmalion</i>
BOX-FOLDER 7/1	<i>Queen Elizabeth Slept Here</i> , 1956-1960 <i>see also</i> <i>George Washington Slept Here</i> Correspondence; contracts <i>Includes:</i> Material related to <i>Dinner at Eight</i>
BOX-FOLDER 7/2-4	<i>Stage Door</i> , 1942-1948, 1954-1958 Correspondence; box office statements; contracts
BOX-FOLDER 7/5-6	<i>Stage Door</i> , 1948-1960 Correspondence; contracts <i>Note:</i> Material related to the television broadcast
BOX-FOLDER 7/7	<i>The Still Small Hours</i> , 1950-1951 Correspondence; contracts
BOX-FOLDER 7/8	<i>The Survivor's Company</i> , 1947 Correspondence; contracts
BOX-FOLDER 7/9	<i>The Unvanquished</i> , 1942 Contracts
BOX-FOLDER 7/10 to 8/10	<i>You Can't Take It With You</i> , 1937-1962, 1971 Correspondence; contracts; financial statements; notes <i>Note:</i> Materials related to international productions; television, radio, and motion picture deals