

Chippendale Company Play Scripts



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

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/perform.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/2017563940>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu023001>

Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Shantel Lambert and Rachel McNellis, 2022 December

Collection Summary

Title: Chippendale Company Play Scripts

Inclusive Dates: 1800-1868

Bulk Dates: 1830-1849

Call No.: ML31.C54

Creator: Chippendale, William Henry, 1801-1888

Extent: 16 items

Extent: 2 containers

Extent: 1 linear foot

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017563940>

Summary: William Henry Chippendale (1801-1888) was an English actor and theater manager who had an extensive career in the United States and Great Britain. This collection is comprised of 16 anthologies of working scripts for plays and operettas written by English playwrights, including William Bayle Bernard, John Baldwin Buckstone, Joseph Stirling Coyne, James Robinson Planché, and Edward Stirling. Chippendale used the materials during his career as an actor between 1834 and 1851, and likely while directing a dramatic company that toured the United States with Solomon Smith. Many of the scripts are heavily annotated with cuts, additions, and stage markings.

Acquisition Information

Gift, Gregory Crow, 2018

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Custodial History

A theatrical company directed by William H. Chippendale likely used the scripts that constitute this collection. It is believed that actor and theater manager Solomon Smith (1801–1869) arranged for Chippendale to direct and tour the United States with an English dramatic company. While on tour, the company was victim to theft and needed to replace their costumes and scripts. The police recovered the materials after the tour, but the company could not afford to ship them back to England, and the materials remained in the possession of Smith's family. The family bound the scripts at an unknown date. During the 1980s, Gregory Crow inherited the collection from Mrs. Emerson Brown, Smith's great-granddaughter. Crow donated the scripts to the Library in 2018.

Print sources do not document the company's U.S. tour. Chippendale signed, dated, and annotated many of the scripts. These markings show that he used the materials while managing a dramatic company at Niblo's Garden in New York City from 1841 to 1842 and when Smith employed him as a stage manager in 1850–1851. Chippendale did not date any of the scripts after 1851, the year his employment with Smith ended, which suggests that they were stolen at this time. It is unlikely that Chippendale parted with the materials willingly, as he had used them for many years. Other actors also signed a few of the scripts, which further supports the existence of a company. Smith's son Thad signed a script in 1864, connecting the materials with the family after Chippendale returned to England in 1853. Scripts dating later than 1853 are present, the year that Smith retired from theater and Chippendale returned to England. Consequently, it appears the collection includes a few items added by Smith's descendants that are unrelated to Chippendale or his company.

Processing History

Shantel Lambert processed the Chippendale Company Play Scripts, and Lambert and Rachel McNellis coded the finding aid in 2022.

Other Repositories

Correspondence to and from William H. Chippendale is housed in the William Henry Chippendale Papers at the David Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Duke University; the Theater Arts Manuscripts Collection at the Harry Ransom Center; the Papers of Noah Miller Ludlow at the Houghton Library at Harvard University; the New-York Historical Society; and the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Related Material

Other collections in the Music Division rich in materials related to theater production in the United States include the [American / Century Play Company Scripts and Business Papers](#), [Federal Theatre Project Collection](#), [Gilbert Miller Papers](#), [Robert L. Stevens Papers](#), [Robert Whitehead Papers](#), and the [Rouben Mamoulian Papers](#). The [Minnie Maddern Fiske and Harrison Grey Fiske Papers](#) housed in the Manuscript Division are also relevant.

Copyright Status

Materials from the Chippendale Company Play Scripts 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 Chippendale Company Play Scripts 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], Chippendale Company Play Scripts, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

William Henry Chippendale was born in Somers Town, London, on August 14, 1801. He was raised in Edinburgh, and his father trained him in acting from a young age. In 1819, after briefly studying to be a printer, Chippendale turned to the stage and made his first professional appearance, playing David in *The Rivals* at the Montrose Theatre in Scotland. Between 1826 and 1836, he toured the provinces of Scotland as part of a theatrical company directed by a Mr. Alexander. Chippendale traveled to New York in August 1836 at the invitation of Stephen Price, manager of the Park Theater, and made his debut on September 1 as Sir Mark Chase in *A Roland for Oliver*. Between 1837 and 1853, Chippendale frequently performed in New York City at the Park Theater, Niblo's Garden, Mitchell's Olympic Theater, Palmo's Opera House, Brougham's Lyceum, and Castle Garden. He also directed a dramatic company at Niblo's Garden between 1840 and 1842, and managed the theater from 1849 to 1850.

Although Chippendale's career took place primarily in New York, he also toured widely in the United States. He performed in Boston and Pittsburgh several times. Between 1845 and 1848, he acted in Noah Ludlow and Solomon (Sol) Smith's theatrical company, appearing in New Orleans, Louisiana, and Mobile, Alabama, and was their stage manager in 1850. It is likely that Smith arranged for Chippendale to tour with an English dramatic company around this time, an event supported by markings in the Chippendale Company Play Scripts. In 1851, Chippendale performed at the New Varieties' Theater in St. Louis, Missouri, under the management of J. M. Field, and directed the play *Fair One with the Golden Locks* the following year.

In 1853, Chippendale returned to London where he appeared at the Haymarket Theatre as St. Anthony Absolute in *The Rivals*. He stayed at the theater for the next fifteen years, starring in both dramatic and comedic roles and frequently working as stage manager. On February 24, 1878, Chippendale made his last theatrical appearance in London at the Lyceum, starring as Polonius in *Hamlet*. In August, he formed the Chippendale Comedy Company and toured Scotland. Chippendale performed on stage for the last time at the Royal Theatre in Glasgow the following year. He died on January 5, 1888, in London.

Chippendale married three times and had 26 children. His third wife, Mary Jane Seaman (married 1866), was an actress in Henry Irving's company, performing in both the United States and England.

Bibliography

- Brown, Thomas Allston. *A History of the New York Stage from the First Performance in 1732 to 1901*, vol. 1. New York: Benjamin Blom, 1904.
- "Chippendale, William Henry." In *Modern English Biography*, vol. 4, edited by Frederic Boase, 42. Truro: Netherton and Worth, 1908.
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- Hampson, Norma. "[William Henry Chippendale \(1801-1888\)](#)." *Explore Shakespeare* (blog), Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, December 7, 2016. Last accessed December 7, 2022.
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- Odell, George C. D. *Annals of the New York Stage*, vols 4-6. New York: Columbia University Press, 1928-1931. Reprinted by AMS Press, 1970
- Pascoe, Charles Eyre. *The Dramatic List: A Record of the Principal Performances of Living Actors and Actresses of the British Stage*. London: David Bogue, 1880.
- Smith, Solomon Franklin. *Theatrical Management in the West and South for Thirty Years. Interspersed with Anecdotal Sketches*. New York: Harper Brothers & Publishers, 1868.
- "Theater Burned: Niblo's Garden in Ruins." *The New York Tribune*. May 7, 1872.
- Van Ravenswaay, Charles. *St. Louis: An Informal History of the City and Its People, 1764-1865*. St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society, 1991.

Scope and Content Note

The Chippendale Company Play Scripts consist of 16 anthologies of working theater scripts published between 1800 and 1868. William H. Chippendale used the scripts while working as an actor and stage manager in England and the United States between 1834 and 1851. It is likely that he also directed a dramatic company, which used the materials while on tour in the United States. The heavily annotated scripts document production practices in mainstream American theater at the time, as well as the performance histories for individual plays. Written by English dramatists and playwrights, the dramas, comedies, farces, and operettas in these volumes also lend insight into the types of British repertoire performed in America. The scripts encompass the works of William Bayle Bernard, John Baldwin Buckstone, Joseph Stirling Coyne, Charles Dance, Prince Hoare, Mark Lemon, John O'Keefe, Richard Brinsley Peake, James Robinson Planché, and Edward Stirling, among others.

Organization of the Chippendale Company Play Scripts

The collection is arranged in one series:

- [Anthologies, 1800-1868](#)

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

Bernard, William Bayle, 1807-1875.
Buckstone, John Baldwin, 1802-1879.
Chippendale, William Henry, 1801-1888--Archives.
Chippendale, William Henry, 1801-1888.
Coyne, J. Stirling (Joseph Stirling), 1803-1868.
Planché, J. R. (James Robinson), 1796-1880.
Smith, Sol. (Solomon), 1801-1869.
Stirling, Edward, 1807-1894.

Subjects

Melodrama, English--19th century.
Theater--England--History--19th century.
Theater--Scotland--History--19th century.
Theater--United States--History--19th century.

Titles

Chippendale Company play materials, 1802-1853.

Form/Genre

Drama.
Melodramas (Drama).

Description of Series

Container
BOX 1-2

Series
Anthologies, 1800-1868

This series consists of 16 anthologies of working theater scripts for approximately 250 plays and operettas by English dramatists and playwrights. William Henry Chippendale used the scripts while working as an actor and stage manager in England and the United States between 1834 and 1851. It is likely that he also directed a dramatic company, which used the materials while touring the United States with actor and theater manager Solomon Smith. The scripts are heavily annotated with cuts, additions, and staging notes that lend insight into theatrical production practices of the time. Additionally, some scripts include a list of English and American productions with their locations, dates, and casting. The dramas, comedies, and farces also document the diverse British repertoire performed in mainstream American theater. William Bayle Bernard, John Baldwin Buckstone, George Coleman, Joseph Stirling Coyne, Charles Dance, Prince Hoare, Mark Lemon, John Maddison Morton, John O'Keefe, Richard Brinsley Peake, James Robinson Planché, Charles Selby, and Edward Stirling are among the playwrights whose works appear in the anthologies.

Each script is dated separately. If available, the date listed is that which Chippendale wrote in the script. If not, the date refers to the script's publication or the play's first performance. Arranged alphabetically by title of anthology.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-2	<p>Anthologies, 1800-1868</p> <p>This series consists of 16 anthologies of working theater scripts for approximately 250 plays and operettas by English dramatists and playwrights. William Henry Chippendale used the scripts while working as an actor and stage manager in England and the United States between 1834 and 1851. It is likely that he also directed a dramatic company, which used the materials while touring the United States with actor and theater manager Solomon Smith. The scripts are heavily annotated with cuts, additions, and staging notes that lend insight into theatrical production practices of the time. Additionally, some scripts include a list of English and American productions with their locations, dates, and casting. The dramas, comedies, and farces also document the diverse British repertoire performed in mainstream American theater. William Bayle Bernard, John Baldwin Buckstone, George Coleman, Joseph Stirling Coyne, Charles Dance, Prince Hoare, Mark Lemon, John Maddison Morton, John O’Keefe, Richard Brinsley Peake, James Robinson Planché, Charles Selby, and Edward Stirling are among the playwrights whose works appear in the anthologies.</p> <p>Each script is dated separately. If available, the date listed is that which Chippendale wrote in the script. If not, the date refers to the script's publication or the play's first performance. Arranged alphabetically by title of anthology.</p>
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BOX 1	<p>Dramas 2</p> <p><i>Contents:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Holcroft, Thomas. <i>The Road to Ruin</i>, 1836• Oxberry, William Henry. <i>The Conscript</i>, 1836• Cooper, Frederick Fox <i>The Deserted Village</i>, undated• Serle, Thomas James. <i>The Yeoman’s Daughter</i>, 1833• Jerrold, Douglas. <i>The White Milliner</i>, 1841• Walker, John. <i>Napoleon!</i>, undated• Bonner, William. <i>The Hunchbacks</i>, undated• Lunn, Joseph. <i>The Shepherd of Derwent Vale</i>, undated• Pocock, Isaac. <i>Zembuca</i>, 1824• Stirling, Edward. <i>The Old Curiosity Shop</i>, 1840

Anthologies, 1800-1868

Container

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Anthologies, 1800-1868

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Anthologies, 1800-1868

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Anthologies, 1800-1868

Container

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BOX 2

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- Planché, James Robinson. *The Invisible Prince*, 1846
- Coyne, Joseph Stirling? *The Spirit of the Fountain*, 1848
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