

**THE MARION E. WADE CENTER
WHEATON COLLEGE, WHEATON, IL**

THE MAN BORN TO BE KING

1940-1953

(Bulk Dates: 1942-1944)

Acq.: 01/1a

Related Wade Author(s): DLS

Future Additions Expected: No

Restrictions: Copies or publication of unpublished materials by Dorothy L. Sayers require permissions from the Sayers Estate.

Finding Aid creation: March 29, 2007

Size: 1 box, 42 folders – 2,266 pages (1 linear ft.), 1 book

Call No.: A-59

Abstract

The Man Born to be King archive contains materials relating to the religious play cycle of the same title by Dorothy L. Sayers including: drafts and scripts of the 12 dramas, production notes, correspondence and fan mail, press cuttings, and correspondence between Sayers and Heinz Geck, who translated the play into German.

Background Information

After the success of Sayers's earlier nativity play for radio, *He That Should Come*, which was broadcast in 1938, the Director of Religious Broadcasting for the B.B.C., J.W. Welch, wrote to Sayers in 1940 asking if she would consider writing a series of plays on the life of Jesus Christ. She agreed, and *The Man Born to be King* was written as a series of 12 plays spanning from Christ's birth to his death. The play cycle was first broadcast as a radio drama in 12 parts on the B.B.C. between December 1941 and October 1942.

Due to the subject matter and the use of "modern" dialogue in the plays, they were met with some opposition from various sectors. In contrast to the critics, however, were scores of individuals from many walks of life who related their appreciation of the plays in hundreds of letters to Sayers and the B.B.C. The play cycle remains one of Sayers's most significant works. *The Man Born to be King* was first published in book form by Victor Gollancz in 1943, shortly after its first broadcast. Several new productions of this play cycle have been broadcast over BBC radio in subsequent years.

The material in this archive was acquired at auction from Sotheby's in London by the Wade Center in 2000. The original Sotheby's lot(s) included in this archive are:

Lot 290 iva-e and Lot 292 ix (fol. 21, p. 66a). Lot 290 ivb included the book in the listing at the end of this finding aid.

Scope and Contents Note

The Man Born to be King archive contains materials relating to the religious play of the same title by Dorothy L. Sayers. Printed copies of the play are found in folders 1-16, 40, and 42, and in the **book** listed at the end of the contents listing. The book, while remaining part of the archive,

is now stored in the Wade Center book holdings, and may be retrieved by the archival staff upon request.

The archive is divided into 5 series: Play Scripts and Notes, Play-Related Correspondence and Fan Mail, Play-Related Press Cuttings, Heinz Geck Correspondence, and Book Photocopies. The **Play Scripts and Notes** series (folders 1-16) contains several scripts from the radio play *The Man Born to be King* (arranged chronologically), as well as production notes and directives. Some notes were handwritten by Sayers herself.

Correspondence and Fan Mail (folders 17-34) includes letters and fan mail relating to *The Man Born to be King*, generally arranged by correspondent's last name. Carbon copy replies from Sayers are often included next to the corresponding letters, as are enclosures such as press clippings and other items which are clearly related to certain letters. Miscellaneous notes and unrelated enclosures discovered amongst the correspondence are placed at the beginning of the series. Backs of letters may contain unidentified letters or works by Sayers.

The **Press Cuttings** series (folders 35-39) contains letters to the editor, book reviews, performance reviews, and topical articles which appear to have been gathered by news clippings services specifically for Dorothy L. Sayers. The clippings remain in the order they were found. More articles and reviews relating to *The Man Born to be King* can be found in the Wade Center article file. Consult the archivist for assistance.

The **Heinz Geck Correspondence** (folders 40-41) spans four years (1946-1949) and primarily includes letters between Sayers and Geck. Heinz Geck was a German prisoner of war who requested permission to translate *The Man Born to be King* into German. Sayers assisted him by answering questions, making suggestions, and providing notes on the play. The letters are arranged chronologically and notes that could not be linked to individual letters were placed at the back of folder 41.

The final series, **Book Photocopies**, (folder 42) contains copies of the cover and the inscription from the presentation copy of *The Man Born to be King* which Sayers gave to her husband, Mac. The book is stored in the Wade Center book holdings and may be retrieved upon request.

Related Materials

Researchers interested in this archive may also wish to consult the following resources in the Wade Center holdings:

"About the BBC radio broadcast of The Man Born to Be King." *Glasgow Herald; the Weekly Review; Daily Telegraph* (April/May 1942) AF-12458

"About the BBC radio broadcast of Man Born to Be King." *Daily Telegraph* (January/February 1942) AF-12461

"B.B.C. Life of Christ: Broadcast to Proceed." *The (London) Times* (9 January 1942): 2. AF-5960

Drakakis, John. *British Radio Drama*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Fairman, Marion Baker. THE NEO-MEDIEVAL PLAYS OF DOROTHY L. SAYERS. Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, 1961. Dissertation

"Following Protest has been lodged with the B.B.C." Lord's Day Observance Society). (n.d.) AF-12627

Frieseke, Angela. DOROTHY L. SAYERS' "THE MAN BORN TO BE KING' SEINE STRUMTUR UND SEINE GESTALTUNG ALS HORSDIELZYKLUS. Ph.D., Westfälischen Wilhelms - Universität zu Münster (Westf.), 1966. Dissertation

Gielgud, Val. "Years of the Locust." *Years of the Locust*. (London: Nicholson & Watson). (1947): 10-13, 44-45, 72-73, 78-79, 88-89, 92-93, 110-111, 142-43, 176-81, 196-97. AF-15920

Hampel, Michael Hans Joachim. DOROTHY L. SAYERS: CREATIVE MIND AND THE HOLY TRINITY. M.A., St. Chad's College, University of Durham, 2002. Dissertation

Hookey, Joseph Ralph. JOHN THE BAPTIST IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS WITHIN JUDAISM. Ph.D., University of Edinburgh, 1963. Dissertation

THE MAN BORN TO BE KING : Title pages, Dedicatory : "The Makers," Introduction, and First Play - Second Play. Incomplete. (ca. 1940-1942) 137 pp. AMs. in 116 lvs. (DLS manuscript #128)

THE MAN BORN TO BE KING : Third Play - Fifth Play, with Biblical references. (ca. 1940-1942) 146 pp. in 107 lvs.: 145 pp. AMs., 1 p. TMs. (DLS manuscript #129)

THE MAN BORN TO BE KING : Sixth Play - Eighth Play. Incomplete. Incomplete version of "Blood Sacrifice" (MS-250) found on versos of TMs. pages. (ca. 1940-1942) 172 pp. in 99 lvs. with revisions: 160 pp. AMs., 12 pp. TMs. (DLS manuscript #130)

THE MAN BORN TO BE KING : Ninth Play - Twelfth Play. Fragment of "Holmes' College Career" (MS-114) and a title page from "Studies in Sherlock Holmes" (MS-212) found on versos of some cc. TMs. pages. (ca. 1940-1942) 201 pp. in 118 lvs. with revisions. (DLS manuscript #131)

"Production Notes on *The Man Born to be King* ." *BBC Features and Drama* (1967 or 1975): 14PP. AF-6022

Reviews of the book and the performance of *The Man Born to be King*, see the Wade Center article file, Dorothy L. Sayers review section.

Sayers, Dorothy L. Related correspondence and miscellanea in the Dorothy L. Sayers Papers archive folders: 314, 321-325, and 520a & b.

Wood, Bethany. *Incorporation of the Incarnation: Dorothy L. Sayers's *The Man Born to be King* and the Wartime BBC*. Master's Thesis. University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2008. Dissertation collection.

See also the Religious Illustrated Cards and Booklets archive, folder 1.

Other materials in the Wade Center holdings may relate to the topics in this archive. See the archivist for further research assistance.

CONTENTS LISTING

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description of Contents</u>
SERIES 1: PLAY SCRIPTS AND NOTES (16 folders, 1941-1951)	
1	Typescripts and carbon copies of the first play of <i>MBTBK</i> , “Kings in Judea,” including a “Long Version” with revisions by DLS. n.d. 79pp.
2	Two copies of the third play of <i>MBTBK</i> , “A Certain Nobleman.” Typescripts, copy 2 contains scene I only, and is typed on the back of another typescript by DLS of <i>Begin Here</i> . n.d. 54pp.
3	Handwritten title page for play seven, “The Light and the Life,” which has en verso a typescript from “Blood Sacrifice,” a short story by DLS published in <i>In the Teeth of the Evidence</i> . Corrected typescript of play eight, “Royal Progress,” complete. [1942], 28pp. (see also: folder 8)
4	Handwritten page of numbers as an unidentified note. Complete typescript of play eleven, “King of Sorrows,” containing other typescripts en verso from DLS’s essay, “Holmes’ College Career,” and the Lord Peter Wimsey detective novel, <i>Gaudy Night</i> . Also contains copy of play 12 (minus last 2pp.), “The King Comes into His Own,” scenes I and part of II, with revisions. En verso typescript draft of the essay “Why Work” by DLS. [ca. 1942], 101pp. (see also: folder 9)
5	Cast lists and dramatis personae for plays 1-12, including typescripts, carbon copies, and handwritten lists by DLS. ca. 1941-1942, 24pp.
6	Typescripts of plays 1-3, with revisions. Stamped pages number: 55-78, 81, 84-106, and 110-126. 1941-1942, 66pp.
7	Typescripts of plays 4-6, with revisions. Stamped pages number: 129-149, 152-153, 156-175, and 178-201. 1942, 72pp.
8	Typescripts of plays 7-9, with revisions. Stamped pages number: 205-225, 228-229, 231-254, 257-263, and 265-280. 1942, 72pp. (see also: folder 3)
9	Typescripts of plays 10-12, with revisions. Stamped pages number: 282, 284-309, 311, and 313-366. 1942, 84pp. (see also: folder 4)
10	Typescript of play eight, “Royal Progress,” with some revisions. 1944, 30pp.
11	Typescripts of production information and cast lists for plays 1-8, with some revisions. 1947, 25pp.

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description of Contents</u>
12	Typescript of play nine, "The King's Supper," complete. Incorrectly dated 1947. Typescripts of production information for plays 9-12, with some revisions. 1948, 35pp.
13	Typescripts of plays 1-3, play 2 missing last page. 1951, 82pp.
14	Typescripts of plays 4-6. 1951, 86pp.
15	Typescripts of plays 7-9. 1951, 96pp.
16	Typescripts of plays 10-12. 1951, 99pp.

SERIES 2: CORRESPONDENCE AND FAN MAIL (18 folders, 1942-1953)

17	Miscellaneous play-related notes, sketches, and enclosures, including the following by J.W. Welch: "Notes by the Director of Religious Broadcasting on <i>The Man Born to be King</i> : To be used by Victor Gollancz as he wishes." n.d.-ca. 1945, 19pp.
18	Anonymous correspondence in order by date, including correspondence from DLS to the editors of the following publications: Church Times (July 23, 1942), Children's Newspaper (October 10, 1942), The Northern Whig (November 11, 1943), and the Manchester Guardian (April 12, 1943). n.d.-1943, 32pp.
19	Names beginning with "A." Includes a letter to William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury dated May 12, 1943. 1942-1944, 32pp.
20	Names beginning with "B." 1942-1943, 69pp.
21	Names beginning with "C." 1942-1944, 82pp. and 66a.
22	Names beginning with "D." 1942-1944, 50pp.
23	Names beginning with "E-F." 1942-1943, 31pp.
24	Names beginning with "G." 1942-1952, 42pp.
25	Names beginning with "H." 1942-1944, 61pp.
26	Names beginning with "I, J, K." 1942-1943, 16pp.
27	Names beginning with "L." 1942-1943, 36pp.
28	Names beginning with "M." 1942-1944, 48pp.

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description of Contents</u>
29	Names beginning with "N, O, P." 1942-1953, 58pp.
30	Names beginning with "R." 1942-1947, 48pp.
31	Names beginning with "S." 1942-1951, 79pp.
32	Names beginning with "T, U." 1942-1943, 58pp.
33	Names beginning with "V, W." 1942-1943, 71pp.
34	Names beginning with "Y." 1943, 15pp.
SERIES 3: PRESS CUTTINGS (5 folders, 1940-1943)	
35	Press cuttings include: letters to the editor, book reviews, performance reviews, and topical articles (see the Wade Center article file for more articles related to <i>The Man Born to be King</i>). 1942-1943, 16pp.
36	Press cuttings, continued. 1941-1943, 45pp.
37	Press cuttings, continued. 1942, 35pp.
38	Press cuttings, continued. 1942, 27pp.
39	Press cuttings, continued. 1940-1943, 40pp.
SERIES 4: HEINZ GECK CORRESPONDENCE (2 folders, 1946-1949)	
40	Letters and notes primarily between DLS and Geck. Some are typed on the backs of carbon copy typescripts of scripts from <i>The Man Born to be King</i> . One half page typescript of what appears to be a portion of text relating to St. Anne's Soho is on the back of a letter dated July 28, 1947. 1946-1947, 73pp.
41	Letters and notes primarily between DLS and Geck. Some are typed on the backs of carbon copy drafts of <i>Introductory Papers on Dante</i> by DLS. Extensive notes, sketches, and miscellaneous enclosures on <i>The Man Born to be King</i> are found after the letter dated November 25, 1948, and at the back of the folder. 1948-1949, 99pp.

SERIES 5: BOOK PHOTOCOPIES (Research Copy only) (1 folder, ca. 1943)

42 Photocopies of the book cover and the inscription to Mac found in the 1st edition copy of *The Man Born to be King*. See the book list below. ca. 1943, 2pp.

Book (ask the archivist for retrieval):

Sayers, Dorothy L. THE MAN BORN TO BE KING. Forward by J.W. Welch. London: Victor Gollancz, 1943. 1st edition, inscribed by DLS to her husband, Mac.